

Mubarak insists Israel probe massacres

NEW YORK (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said he would press Israel to investigate alleged Israeli military massacres of Egyptian war prisoners, the New York Times reported Tuesday. Mr. Mubarak, in an interview Monday at his home in the Cairo suburb of Heliopolis, said he had put off raising the delicate question with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin while he was negotiating with the Palestinians. "I didn't want to create a problem while negotiating with the Palestinians, and it was enough for Rabin to have this problem," Mr. Mubarak told the New York Times. But he warned that Egypt insisted on answers to its queries about how many Egyptian war prisoners and civilians were killed by Israeli troops during the wars in 1956 and 1967. Israel has not replied to his government's demand for an investigation, he said, and public opinion in Egypt is taking the case very seriously. "We told the Israelis this situation cannot be solved unless you start an investigation... Whoever committed a crime should be put before the courts so as not to create a misunderstanding between the two countries," he said.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية - الراي

French leaders' ratings tumble

PARIS (AFP) — The confidence rating of French President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Alain Juppe has tumbled again, a new opinion poll said Tuesday as the two leaders faced fallout from unpopular budget proposals and an embarrassing political scandal. The poll, carried out for the weekly La Vie by the CSA institute, said Juppe's rating dropped nine points to 45 per cent on a month ago when people were asked if they trusted him to deal with France's problems. Mr. Chirac for his part fell seven points to 48 per cent. Forty-five per cent said they did not have confidence in the prime minister and there were two per cent of "don't knows." In Mr. Chirac's case 48 per cent said they trusted the president, 44 per cent did not and there were eight per cent of "don't-knows." The poll confirmed a trend of falling popularity for the two leaders. On Sunday, a survey in the Journal du Dimanche newspaper by the IFOP institute said that Mr. Chirac's popularity score had dropped another six points to 33 per cent, while Mr. Juppe's had tumbled 11 points to 37 per cent in a month.

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SLA militiaman wounded by bomb

MARJAYOUN (AFP) — The Iranian-backed Hizbollah bombed a patrol of Israel's proxy South Lebanon Army (SLA) on Tuesday, wounding a militiaman, the SLA said. Hizbollah said two militiamen were killed and others wounded when its commandos detonated a roadside bomb near an SLA patrol in the border zone occupied by Israel in South Lebanon. But an SLA spokesman said one militiaman was wounded in the bomb attack in the western sector of the Israeli-held zone. The attack came a day after Hizbollah shelled an Israeli army position in the occupied zone killing two Israeli soldiers and wounding an officer.

Turkey urges Iraqi Kurds to disarm

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey has urged rival Iraqi Kurds to prolong a truce and work for lasting peace in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq, a Foreign Ministry official said Tuesday. "We proposed that they extend the ceasefire and stressed the importance we attach to a restoration of peace," he said after talks in Ankara Monday between the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). He added it was "just as important to stop" Turkish Kurd separatists of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) from establishing themselves in the region. Kurdish officials said Monday that the Turkish Foreign Ministry had urged the two groups to work to extend indefinitely the cease-fire agreed on Aug. 11. The two groups, which have jointly controlled northern Iraq in defiance of the 1991 Gulf war, have clashed over power-sharing and tax revenues since May 1994. More than 2,000 lives have been lost. They have met twice in Ireland for U.S. and Turkish sponsored talks at which they agreed to a truce.

Palestinians see peace shortlived

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Six out of 10 Palestinians do not expect a lasting peace with Israel, according to an opinion poll published Tuesday. The Centre for Palestinian Research and Studies found that 60 per cent believed peace would be short-lived and only 19 per cent that it would really last. Another 12 per cent said peace would last to "some extent" and four per cent to a "large extent." The remainder of the 1,190 Gazans and West Bankers questioned by the Nahalsh-based centre said they did not know. The survey was carried out in September before Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) struck an agreement on Sunday to extend autonomy over the West Bank.

Rifkind refuses to meet Velayati

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind Tuesday said he would not meet with his Iranian counterpart this year at the United Nations, partly because of Iran's stand on the Salman Rushdie affair. Mr. Rifkind told a news conference Tuesday that he would not meet with Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati during this year's U.N. General Assembly. Britain and Iran have had bilateral talks every year in recent memory. "I think a combination of factors mean there will be no such meeting," he said, first citing "other pressing" engagements. "I believe also there has not yet been satisfactory progress with regard to Rushdie that we consider necessary and desire," Mr. Rifkind said. "That is a matter of regret, but that is a fact which cannot be ignored." Earlier this month, Iran refused to give a written promise not to seek to kill Mr. Rushdie whom it condemned to death in a fatwa six years ago.

Accord is not final yet - Erakat

JERICHO (Agencies) — The Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement supposed to be signed Thursday in Washington still has significant holes, with time running out to fill them, a senior Palestinian negotiator said Tuesday. The PLO is still waiting to hear from Israel on a timetable for starting the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities in the West Bank, said Saeb Erekat, minister of local affairs in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). "At this moment we have not yet finalised dates for the redeployment, and that's a major hanging issue in the whole agreement," Dr. Erekat told reporters at his office in Jericho. "I hope that we will be able to finish." The accord on expanding Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank was initiated Sunday in Taba, Egypt. It calls for a step-by-step pull-out of Israeli troops from Palestinian towns and villages. The town of Hebron would be last, with soldiers remaining in parts of the town to protect Jewish settlers living there. Hebron, where 450 Jewish settlers live amid 120,000 Palestinians, has been the site of almost daily clashes in recent months. On Tuesday,

Libya said to have ordered expulsion of all Palestinians

Arafat appeals to Qadhafi to halt move
300,000 Sudanese also face ouster

Combined agency dispatches

LIBYAN LEADER Muammar Qadhafi on Tuesday reportedly ordered all Palestinians to leave the country within 24 hours to 48 hours and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat immediately appealed to Colonel Qadhafi to stop the expulsions. The expulsion order was disclosed by a Libyan official at the Salloom border point with Egypt who also said that the first wave of 1,500 Palestinians were expected to the frontier soon. In Khartoum, a Sudanese official said Col. Qadhafi had also ordered the expulsion of 300,000 Sudanese from his country. About 300,000 Sudanese are to be deported from Libya "as part of internal measures by the Libyan authorities," Salah Mohammad Osman Amaseeh, the acting secretary general of the Sudanese expatriates bureau, said. He said he had been told by the Sudanese embassy in Tripoli that 15,000 Sudanese were stuck at the Libyan border town of Kufra by early Tuesday waiting for transportation, and warned the flood was likely to grow. He said the measures were taken in line with Libyan law ordering all aliens illegally residing in Libya to leave the country. In Tunis, Mr. Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), appealed against the expulsion of Palestinians. "I appeal to my brother, President Muammar, to make the right decision concerning his Palestinian brothers and allow them to return to their place of residence in Libya," Mr. Arafat, was quoted as saying by the French news agency, Agence France Presse. He also asked Col. Qadhafi "not to increase the suffering" of the Palestinians "under these current circumstances." "We are already faced with

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Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor on Monday meet with European Parliament President Miguel Martinez in Strasbourg (Petra photo)

King reaffirms stands on Jerusalem, situation in Iraq and Palestinian ties

Their Majesties arrive in Washington after visit to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein said that sovereignty over the Holy City of Jerusalem should not fall under anyone except God and the city should belong to all followers of the three monotheistic religions equally. In an open dialogue with members of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, King Hussein said Jerusalem should become "the essence and symbol of peace." The King added that the western part of Jerusalem is the de facto capital of Israel and "I do not see why it should not be possible to have both parts become the capitals of both the Palestinians and Israel." Answering a question on Iraq, King Hussein expressed deep concern over the suffering of the Iraqi people, saying that they have suffered so long and may continue to suffer. "The degree of the suffering of the Iraqi people is obvious to us and I believe that every effort should be made by the Iraqis themselves, by the Arab states and their leaders and by the international community to bring an end to this suffering," he said. Basically as it stands, internally and externally, Iraq is potentially a rich country, he noted. "What is going wrong is the absence of democracy, the absence of people's sharing in shaping their future, the absence of pluralism, and obviously the absence of respect for human rights," the King said. Iraqis should determine their own future by themselves and "I believe only

Bosnian negotiations get under way at U.N.

Clinton announces accord

Combined agency dispatches

THE WARRING parties in Bosnia, prodded by the United States and its European allies, opened a new round of negotiations Tuesday, urged by Secretary of State Warren Christopher to seize "the moment in history" and reach a ceasefire. Convening the meeting, which also included diplomats from the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the European Union, Mr. Christopher said it was "an important day, a time to maintain the momentum for peace." He said there was "some hope" of reaching agreement on a governmental structure for a Bosnian state divided between Serbs and a Muslim-Croatian federation. In what has emerged as a pattern in the negotiations, the Bosnian Muslim government was threatening up the last moment to boycott the session because of Serb demands. But in the end, all three parties were seated at the round table on the 12th floor of the U.S. mission to the United Nations. Yugoslav Foreign Minister Milan Milutinovic said just before the meeting: "We are discussing constitutional arrangements and I hope we will adopt them by tonight." But a Bosnian official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Serbs opposed a government proposal for Bosnia-wide parliamentary elections. Instead, they wanted each side to appoint the lawmakers. Their efforts to create two completely separate states, one of which could secede at some later date, are evident, Sven Alkalaj, Bosnian ambassador to the United States, told the Associated Press. The Bosnian official said the Serbs also rejected a Bosnian government suggestion that members of the presidency — the proposed executive body — be chosen by popular vote. In addition, he said, the Serbs want the presidency confined to dealing with fore-

Fresh protests in north Sudan - exile

CAIRO (AFP) — New anti-government protests have broken out in a northern industrial region of Sudan, the head of the Sudanese opposition coalition said on Tuesday. "Demonstrations have been going for three days and continued last night (Monday) in Albara and the neighbouring cities of Berher and Damer," 300 kilometres north of Khartoum, Muharak Fadel Al Mahdi told AFP in Cairo. "Railway workers and residents have been shouting anti-government slogans and fierce demonstrations have been reported," Mr. Mahdi, the general secretary of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), said in a call from London. Mr. Mahdi said "disturbances" had also been going on for three days at Ahliya University in Omdurman, the twin city of Khartoum. "Security and members of the Islamic National Front (INF) have attacked students from the opposition and some teachers and staff," Mr. Mahdi said. An Ahliya student arrested during a wave of violent protests that erupted on Sept. 11 in Khartoum faces trial for tearing up a copy of the Holy Koran in the demonstrations. Mr. Mahdi said Sudanese security continued to hold 29 students from the unrest two weeks ago. The NDA head said the opposition coalition had decided to hold a conference in Cairo in October to be attended by all the northern opposition parties and southern rebels. The opposition's last meeting in Asmara, Eritrea, in June created a joint platform to topple Sudan's Islamic regime. Khartoum on Tuesday accused Cairo of "hostility" for hosting the conference (see page 12).

S. Arabia seeks to resolve border disputes this year

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia is actively seeking to resolve long-standing border disputes in the Arabian Peninsula before a Gulf Arab summit in December.

But diplomats and Gulf sources say that while the kingdom's rulers have achieved part of their goal in recent months, resolving a territorial dispute between Bahrain and Qatar appeared to be still some way off.

"I don't see Saudi resolving that dispute before next year and before settling its own dispute with Qatar," a Western diplomat in Doha said on Tuesday.

Saudi King Fahd, in the second such visit by a senior Saudi official in a week, sent his special adviser and long-time aide Ibrahim Al Anqari to Qatar on Monday to discuss the kingdom's dispute with its much smaller neighbour and Doha's dispute with Manama, diplomats said.

The first mission was led by Abdul Aziz Ben Abdullah Al Kowiteer, a minister of state, who arrived in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday with a message from the Saudi leader to his UAE counterpart.

Diplomats said the visit was all part of Riyadh's revived effort to move faster towards resolving its border disputes.

The Saudi-Qatari dispute

earlier led to a border clash, much tension between the two states and threatened the cohesion of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

GCC leaders last met in December in Bahrain where they agreed to resolve their border disputes before their next annual summit, a year later in Oman.

"I think significant progress is being done on that dispute (what Qatar) and Saudi Arabia won't be able to take a more active role in the Bahrain-Qatar dispute before resolving its own dispute," said the diplomat.

A Gulf Arab source agreed, adding: "Saudi Arabia appears to be keen on finishing all these disputes. Qatar too is serious about resolving its problem with Saudi Arabia."

In recent months, Saudi Arabia, the dominant GCC partner, has moved to resolve its border disputes with Yemen and GCC member Oman which has also settled its own dispute with Sanaa.

"There is virtually no problem" for Riyadh reaching a border accord with the United Arab Emirates once experts work out technical details, the Gulf source said.

Gulf sources and diplomats said similar Saudi negotiations with Kuwait for a border

accord were not expected to face any major obstacles. Saudi Arabia also has land borders with Iraq and Jordan.

But diplomats say neither Bahrain nor Qatar so far appear willing to budge on their claim to a cluster of Gulf islands and reefs and the dispute which, like others in the region, had led to tension and even clashes between the two GCC states.

"I think a resolution to the Qatari-Saudi and other disputes will bring pressure on Qatar and Bahrain to resolve their problem," said the Western diplomat.

Saudi Arabia stepped in to mediate between the two states in the 1980s but failed to bring them closer. Qatar, to the displeasure of some GCC members, raised the dispute when it hosted the 1990 Gulf Arab summit at a time when world leaders were concentrating on dealing with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Qatar later took the dispute to the International Court of Justice, refusing to withdraw the case unless an acceptable mediation was found.

Bahrain has rejected the jurisdiction of the court which is expected to rule in the case by the end of the 1996.

Jordanian delegate presents his credentials to U.N. chief

NEW YORK (U.N.) — Hasan Abu Nimah, the new permanent representative of Jordan to the United Nations, has presented his credentials to Secretary-General Boutros Ghali.

Mr. Abu Nimah served from 1990 as his country's ambassador to Italy. During that period he simultaneously represented Jordan in Portugal, at the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme (WFP).

From 1978 through 1990 he served as Jordan's ambassador to Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. In that post he also represented Jordan before the European Commission, the Council of the European Union and the

European Parliament and was dean of the Arab diplomatic corps in Belgium and Luxembourg.

Earlier assignments included assignment at the embassy of Jordan in London (1973 to 1977), attending the U.N. General Assembly in 1977; the Foreign Ministry in Amman (1972 to 1973); first secretary in the United States (1970 to 1972); second secretary in Iraq (1967 to 1970); and third secretary in Kuwait (1965 to 1967).

Mr. Abu Nimah participated in the Arab-Israeli peace talks held in Washington from 1992 to 1994. He is a recipient of the Order of the Grand Cross of the Crown of Belgium, 1989; the Order of Independence of Jordan, Grade 1, 1988; the Order of

Al Kawkab of Jordan, 1966; the Medal of Pope Paul VI, 1964; and the Order of the Grand Cross of Merit of Italy.

Prior to entering Jordan's foreign service, Mr. Abu Nimah was a political commentator for the Jordan Broadcasting Service and a lecturer at the Teacher Training Centre, Ramallah, operated by the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Born on Sept. 11, 1935 in Battir, Jerusalem, Mr. Abu Nimah graduated from the American University of Beirut in 1959. He attended Al Ummah College, Bethlehem, from 1952 to 1955.

Woman jailed in Kuwait for killing maid

KUWAIT (R) — A Kuwaiti court on Tuesday jailed a 35-year-old Iraqi woman for five years followed by deportation for beating her Filipino maid to death.

The court sentenced Janet Shamoun to five years in prison and ordered her deportation (after the jail term is served), an official of the criminal court told reporters.

She was the second Arab woman jailed by Kuwaiti courts this month for beating her Asian maid to death. Ms. Shamoun's lawyers said they had appealed against the verdict and sentence.

Officials have said the family of the victim, 24-year-old Margaret Almogela, have accepted \$56,500 in so-called "blood money" from Ms. Shamoun's relatives to drop a private prosecution.

Prosecution lawyers said that the payment had no effect on the state case against Ms. Shamoun.

The Iraqi woman, married to a Kuwaiti, was not in the court for the verdict. Kuwaiti courts do not require defendants to be present in sessions held to announce verdicts.

Walid Yousef Bouerki, Ms. Shamoun's husband, acknowledged the maid had been beaten but said she died from a lung ailment.

In remarks that referred in part to Kuwaiti hatred for Iraq following its 1990-91 occupation, he alleged the court had been influenced by Ms. Shamoun's nationality and her former religion — she was a Christian before converting to Islam eight years ago.

"We believe that the nationality and the former religion had a bearing on the sentence. This woman has been done an injustice," Mr. Bouerki, sounding angry, said by telephone.

Ms. Shamoun has been in detention since June on suspicion of causing the death of Almogela, who died in a hospital from severe injuries to her head and other body parts, lawyers said. The charge against her was of "causing death through beating."

The prosecution had asked for the death penalty. A lawyer familiar with the case said: "A photograph of the victim shows marks of heavy beating. You would not believe that it is a picture of a human being," he said.

Iran denies receiving Chinese nuclear help

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran denied Tuesday a report that China had supplied it with uranium-processing equipment that would enable it to build nuclear weapons.

An official from Iran's nuclear energy agency said the report in the British Sunday Telegraph newspaper was "totally baseless," as China also denied the claims.

Iran, a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency, "has several times reiterated that it will use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes only," the Iranian official said, quoted by the daily Tehran Times.

"Iran calls for the total dismantling of nuclear arsenals worldwide in order to have a nuclear-free world," he added.

The Sunday Telegraph, quoting "confidential reports," said China had provided Iran with crucial uranium processing equipment that would enable Tehran to manufacture its own nuclear warheads.

A Chinese Foreign Minis-

try spokesman said Tuesday: "China has never exported any sensitive technology or equipment concerning processing and enrichment of uranium and production of heavy water."

China signed an accord several years ago for the sale of two reactors to Iran, but the contract has not been confirmed over financing difficulties.

"There is not any nuclear cooperation between China and Iran that is not under the safeguard of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)," spokesman Chen Jian told a news conference in Beijing.

According to Western experts, reports of the delivery to Iran of uranium reprocessing equipment — which is capable of extracting plutonium — were "groundless," given that Iran does not yet possess a nuclear reactor capable of producing uranium.

The enrichment of uranium is possible, but the technique requires expensive equipment, they said.

Libya: U.S., not Tripoli, is guilty of terrorism

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Libya's Ambassador Mohammad Azwai on Monday again said his country would not extradite to Britain or the United States the two men wanted in connection with the 1988 airliner bombing over Scotland.

He was replying to a line in U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's speech to the General Assembly which said the Security Council had recognised the importance of countering "state-sponsored terrorism" by imposing sanctions on Libya.

Mr. Azwai said the suspects could be handed over for trial in the Hague, where a Scottish judge could conduct the trial.

He said the major reason Libya would not extradite the two to the U.S. or Britain was "because both countries are adversaries. They have condemned the suspects before the trial takes place."

He said Libya was not guilty of terrorism but its victim, He alleged that the U.S. trained and sheltered terrorists against Libya.

Mr. Azwai said that if the suspects were found guilty Libya would pay compensation. But if they were acquitted, Libya would sue the U.S. and Britain.

He said the Security Coun-

cil embargo on air transport, some oil equipment and some financial transactions should be revoked and negotiations held to normalise relations with both the U.S. and Britain.

The sanctions on Libya were imposed in 1992 for its failure to extradite for trial two men wanted in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland which killed 270 people.

Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia called for the lifting of the sanctions against Libya and Iraq.

Addressing the U.N. General Assembly, Mr. Ben Yahia said Tunisia "has called, in the light of Libyan initiatives for an early resolution of the Lockerbie question, to put an end to the embargo imposed on the brotherly Libyan people."

These curbs were "not only hurting Libya but also affecting in a seriously negative way the stability and development of all countries in the region," he said.

His reference to Libyan initiatives appeared to mean the offer by Tripoli to allow the two suspects to be tried at the seat of the World Court. But this is regarded as unsatisfactory by Britain and the U.S. which insist the two men must be tried in either a British or U.S. court.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kuwait appoints Mauritania envoy

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait, thawing a Gulf war-era chill in ties with Mauritania, said on Tuesday it had appointed an ambassador to the African country for the first time since the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis. A decree published in the government gazette named Abdullah Al Sraia as ambassador to Nouakchott. Mauritania is one of several Arab and African states whose relations with Kuwait were damaged over their sympathy for Iraq during its seven-month occupation of the Gulf country. Kuwait downgraded diplomatic representation and ended or froze substantial financial aid to these states in response to their sympathy for Baghdad. Kuwait's Nouakchott mission has been headed by a charge d'affaires since the 1991 Gulf war that ended the occupation. Mauritania's embassy in Kuwait is currently headed by a charge d'affaires.

Greek jets participate in Cyprus exercise

NICOSIA (AP) — Five Greek warplanes on Monday joined war games under way in Cyprus, the first time that forces from the mainland have taken part in the annual exercises since the 1974 Turkish invasion. Cyprus Television interrupted programming to show the U.S.-built ground attack aircraft — three Corsair jets and two F-16s — diving on hypothetical enemy targets south of Nicosia. Greek warplanes flew over Cyprus during last year's manoeuvres, but did not take part in the games, codenamed Nikiforos, Greek for victor. Cyprus Defence Minister Costas Eliades said the participation Monday of Greek air force jets in Nikiforos this year underscored the importance of the island's joint defence pact with Greece. The pact, signed two years ago, has been criticised in both countries as a propaganda ploy that would not help build up Cypriot defences. Mr. Eliades rejected the criticism. "The joint defence pact is a reality which was proved today," he said.

Cyprus jails 3 Britons on drugs charges

NICOSIA (R) — Three Britons were jailed in Cyprus on Monday for periods ranging from 45 to 50 days after pleading guilty to drugs possession. A court in the port town of Larnaca sentenced postman John Mancer, 24, to 45 days imprisonment for possessing speed pills, while post office worker Edward John Dimond, 34, and businessman Paul Colin Lingwood, 25, were jailed for 50 days each for possessing 5.85 and 4.25 grammes of cannabis respectively. The home towns of the accused were not made public. The accused were arrested at an apartment in the Ayia Napa holiday resort on Sept. 11. District Judge Antonis Liakos told the accused penalties must be a deterrent to curtail the drugs problem in Cyprus and in the holiday resort of Ayia Napa in particular. Another five British holidaymakers were jailed by the same court last week on similar charges. Police say there has been a marked increase in the number of foreigners arrested, mainly in the Ayia Napa resort, on charges of possessing drugs. Cyprus police chief Andreas Potamitis was recently quoted as saying foreigners bring narcotics to the island to sell to pay the expenses of their holiday.

Iran military 'close to self-sufficiency'

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's defence minister said Monday that his country's armed forces were almost self-sufficient in weapons, and that Tehran was the best source of arms to other countries in the region. The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) quoted Mohammad Forouzandeh as saying that "a great deal of independent countries aware of Iran's ability to produce all sorts of conventional weapons have asked the Islamic republic to invest in their military industries." According to IRNA, monitored in Cyprus, he said that since the end of Iran's 1980-88 war with Iraq, "a large part" of the indigenous military industries had been converted to civilian use. He said that last year the monetary value of civilian goods produced by the military industries exceeded what they produced for armed forces. He said 60 per cent of the goods were made for the civilian market.

Sudan, China voice mutual support

BEIJING (AP) — Sudanese leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir thanked China on Tuesday for its economic aid and said the two governments share a dislike of western criticism of their human rights records. "Westerners are always using human rights and democracy as excuses to interfere in countries' internal affairs," Lieutenant-General Bashir told a news conference. "As a Third World country, China opposes this." Although Gen. Bashir has outlawed the Communist Party in Sudan, along with other parties, he made it clear he and China's communist leaders agreed on some points. "Our profound rejection of hegemonism and intervention in the internal affairs of other countries is a solid foundation for our cooperation," he said.

MEA tickets to go on sale in U.S.

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's national carrier Middle East Airlines (MEA) will put its tickets on sale in the United States in two weeks. MEA Chairman Khaled Salam said in remarks published on Tuesday. "The U.S. decision to allow selling MEA tickets inside the United States has not been implemented yet. We are supposed to begin sales in two weeks," Mr. Salam was quoted as saying by the Lebanese newspaper Al Anwar. The U.S. government eased restrictions on air travel to Lebanon a week ago, allowing U.S. citizens to travel after obtaining written approval from the State Department. The decision amends a 1985 travel ban, imposed after the hijacking of a Trans World Airlines plane in Beirut, so U.S. air carriers can route passengers to Lebanon on other airlines via third countries. "It is a positive step but it is a small one," Mr. Salam was quoted as saying.

Iran offers troops to U.N. in Bosnia

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said on Monday his country was willing to take part in U.N. peacekeeping operations and to send troops to Bosnia.

In a speech to the General Assembly, he said if the Security Council had committed the necessary forces for the protection of "safe areas" in Bosnia, including accepting assistance offered by Islamic countries, the Bosnian Serbs could not have "continued... their crimes of genocide" against the inhabitants of those areas, most of them Muslim.

"Iraq... announces its readiness in principle to participate in United Nations peacekeeping operations, with its tenets and the fundamental principles of the charter," Mr. Velayati said.

"Here, I deem it necessary to reiterate the preparedness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to dispatch peacekeeping forces to Bosnia and Herzegovina, which we had earlier committed along with other Islamic countries."

If the Security Council had at least provided the necessary mandate or committed the necessary forces for the protection of the "safe areas," including by taking advantage of the assistance offered by the Islamic countries, "the Bosnian Serbs could not have continued, with relative ease, their crimes of genocide against the defenceless people of U.N. declared safe areas."

Mr. Velayati said all countries willing and able to take part in U.N. peacekeeping "should be treated equally, and without discrimination." While a unified U.N. command structure was essential, "its leadership should not be the monopoly of a handful of states."

U.S. is 'extremely' pleased by self-rule expansion accord

WASHINGTON (USIA) — State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns said Secretary of State Warren Christopher, in a three-way telephone conversation with the two leaders, congratulated Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat after they successfully concluded their negotiations on the Interim Agreement as provided in the declaration of principles.

"The secretary is extremely pleased about the success of their negotiations," Mr. Burns said. "And I would just note that the United States did play a major part in these negotiations — as Israel and the Palestinian Authority have acknowledged. In fact, I think it's perhaps one of the first times where there has been a shuttle diplomacy by telephone. And that was carried on by Ambassador Dennis Ross, as well as by Secretary Christopher."

Mr. Burns noted that Ross, U.S. Middle East negotiator, "was on the phone constantly for hours every day over the last week and at many points with Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat, together, on the phone... And I think both sides have credited him and credited the U.S. with having played a key role in getting them across the finish line and to this agreement."

Mr. Christopher will cut short his round of bilateral and multilateral meetings at the United Nations General Assembly to return to Washington for the Sept. 28 signing of the Israeli-Palestinian peace accord, another spokesman said.

It is likely that Mr. Christopher will return to Washington from New York late on Sept. 27. His already hectic five-day schedule of meetings

on the fringes of the U.N. General Assembly is now being compressed into three.

"Some of the events are Mideast related, so those, he can do here," the acting spokesman said, but he was able to specify only one of them. "The secretary will host an informal meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee of key countries providing assistance to the Palestinians," he said, "and he may have some additional meetings with the parties."

White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry told a questioner Monday he would check on whether the agreement on self-rule for the Palestinians on the West Bank requires additional U.S. aid, but he noted that "one of the things we have done since October 1993 is build on the work that the Israelis and Palestinians have done by encouraging and providing incentives for the international community to do more to progress the Palestinians will surely make as they implement their side of the declaration and the interim agreement."

He said one of the problems has been that pledges made were not received in timely fashion. He said Washington will "encourage others to be more forthcoming with their donations, but that applies equally to us. We've got commitments that we have made dating back to October 1993 that need to be fulfilled."

President Clinton will welcome leaders from the region on Sept. 28 for the ceremony marking signature of the self-rule agreement, and he intends to have bilateral sessions with the principals that day and the next. There will be a luncheon in the State Dining Room for dignitaries at the signing and a reception that evening.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 Madeline
14:30 Super Champs
15:00 Tomorrow's World
15:30 Amazing Stories
16:00 Documentary
17:00 Children's Programme — Le Monde Enigmas
17:30 Telefilm "Les Cinq Dernieres Minutes"
19:00 News in French
19:15 L'Ulysse
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious Universe
20:00 Anything for a Laugh
20:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
21:15 Doc — The Other Americas
22:00 News in English
22:25 Prism
22:45 Drama — Law and Order
23:45 Doc — Silk Road
00:30 Varieties

PRAYER TIMES

05:45 Fajr
06:22 (Sunrise) Doha
12:27 Oghir
15:52 'Asr
18:31 Maghreb
19:49 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Sveidish, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrence Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Moderate weather conditions will prevail with temperatures rising slightly becoming around average with winds easterly light to moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Min./Max. temp. 17/30
Aqaba 24/37
Dharrat 15/33
Jordan Valley 23/36

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 27 Aqaba 33. Humidity readings: Amman 37 per cent. Aqaba 29 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mukles Mazaiah 820425
Dr. Khalid Al Asfour 696440
Dr. Osama Al Hussein 847299
Dr. Salim Al Daboubi 776751
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637053
Nairokhi pharmacy 626572
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yasoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsi pharmacy 637660
Nairokhi pharmacy 626572
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Mohammad Al Hilu 279773
Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Ghassan Al Faqih 906130
Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Rescue 192 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 634002
Traffic Police 630321
Public Security Department 605800
Hotel Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 64281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 64244/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malha J. Amn. 630140
Palestine, Shamsiah 66411/4
Shamsiah Hospital 669131
University Hospital 648485
Al-Muhsen Hospital 66722/73
The Islamic, Abdali 66612/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 66416/66
Italian, Al-Muhsen 77701/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafiah 77511/26
Army, Shamsiah 89161/15
Queen Alia Hospital 60240/50
Amal Hospital 674183
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990900
IRBID:
Prince Basma Hospital (02)25555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Al Nafta Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (02)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
08:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:30 Jeddah (RJ)
09:55 Jeddah (RJ)
10:30 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:50 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
12:15 Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
12:55 Brussels, Paris (RJ)
13:00 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
13:15 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
13:15 London, Berlin (RJ)
13:25 Rome (RJ)
13:25 Beirut (RJ)
01:15 Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

18:00 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
11:30 Jeddah (SV)
13:15 Cairo (MS)
18:30 London, Beirut (BA)
18:30 Athens (PK)
21:00 Beirut (ME)
22:00 Beirut (ME)
22:00 Sana'a (YI)
22:00 Algiers (AH)
22:00 Larnaca (CY)
22:00 Amsterdam (KL)
23:30 Athens (OA)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
10:00 Rome (RJ)
11:25 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:40 Berlin, London (RJ)
12:10 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:45 Istanbul (RJ)
13:00 Colombo (RJ)
13:00 Cairo (RJ)
13:10 Beirut (RJ)
13:10 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
13:10 New Delhi (RJ)
13:15 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
13:15 Aden (RJ)

Ross Perot launches campaign for third U.S. political party

WASHINGTON (R) — Once again, maverick billionaire Ross Perot has shaken up U.S. presidential politics with a surprise announcement Monday that he is forming a third party for the 1996 election.

The Texas industrialist with his familiar high-pitched twang made the announcement on CNN's Larry King Live, the same political soapbox he used to launch his independent presidential candidacy in 1992.

Mr. Perot left many unanswered questions such as whether he would seek his own party nomination or if he could turn a third party into a winning force to win the presidency in 1996. A third party has never won a presidential election.

Mr. Perot said the new party's main aim would be to make U.S. politics more responsive to the American people.

In typical fashion, the

folksy Perot left much up in the air, even the definitive name of the third party movement. He said it would be the "Independence Party" everywhere but California where it would be known as the "Reform Party".

California is the largest state with the highest political prize in the 1996 presidential election.

In 1992, Mr. Perot finished third with 19 per cent of the vote in an independent bid against winner Bill Clinton, who captured 43 per cent of the vote against then President George Bush with 37 per cent.

At the time, he headed a movement called United We Stand which was not technically a third party.

Mr. Perot was obviously stepping into a void since polls show a growing number of Americans disillusioned with either Democratic or Republican parties and seemingly ready

for a new independent voice that does not express politics as usual.

"So, tonight we are going to start the process of creating a party for the independent voter," Mr. Perot said. Some political commentators were sceptical about his intentions.

"I think he sees politics as a giant video game for millionaires," said Mr. Bush's former press secretary Marlin Fitzwater on the CNBC cable network. Mr. Fitzwater said a third party "sets him up as a broker for other candidates" who, he said, will find they cannot meet his requirements.

Presidential scholar Mark Rozell said Mr. Perot wanted to shake up the system and get back into the political limelight being grabbed by retired General Colin Powell, who has drawn huge crowds while he signs his autobiography on a book tour and is immensely popular in polls.

"Perot is being dwarfed by Powell," Mr. Rozell told Reuters.

Gen. Powell, the former head of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Gulf War, has said he will decide in November whether or not to run as a Republican or an independent.

Mr. Fitzwater said he thought Gen. Powell could out win on his own. "I don't think an independent Colin Powell can win," he said.

Mr. Perot said he would start forming the third party in three states, California, Ohio and Maine, and the party would pick a presidential candidate next spring.

Mr. Perot said he wanted to see "some bright new faces" entering the presidential race.

Currently, Senator Bob Dole leads a crowded field of Republican contenders to run against Mr. Clinton.



Solo oarsman crosses Atlantic

BREST, France (AP) — A Brittany oarsman crossed the symbolic Ouessant-Cap Lizard Line after 103 days alone at sea and 500,000 oar strokes across the Atlantic, his liaison said. Joseph Le Guen undertook the solo Atlantic crossing to raise money for volunteer ocean rescue teams. When the 48-year-old Le Guen completes his journey, he will not have broken the speed record, but will be the first ever to carry mail between the United States and France via rowboat. Record holder Gerard D'Abboville rowed across the Atlantic in 72 days in 1980. Since 1980, 10 people have tried to row across the Atlantic. Only D'Abboville and Le Guen have succeeded. In his eight-metre rowing shell, Le Guen has 2,700 postcards and letters from companies and the mayors of Brest and Chatham, Massachusetts, where he departed for France June 15. Stamped with American postage, the pieces of mail will be sold in Brest to collectors for 250 francs (\$50) each. Departure and arrival cards will be sold by the Stamp Collectors' Club of Brest for 30 francs (\$6) each, with proceeds to go to the National Ocean Rescue Society. Le Guen crossed the symbolic Cap Lizard Line Sunday. The Cape in Brittany is the traditional arrival point for trans-Atlantic crossings. The photograph shows Mr. Le Guen just before arriving to shore on Molene Island (AFP photo).

Ethnic opposition party stays away from Karachi peace talks

KARACHI (AFP) — Karachi's main ethnic opposition party stayed away from peace talks with the government Tuesday in protest against the alleged murder of two activists in police custody, party officials said.

The 10th round of negotiations between the government and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and the ethnic-based Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) aimed at ending bloodshed in this port city was scheduled to begin in Islamabad Tuesday.

The decision came as a mark of protest at the death of two MQM activists Sunday, whom the party has charged were "brutally tortured" and killed by security forces.

The MQM further charged that the bodies were "desecrated" by law enforcement personnel. The police maintain that the two men were killed here

Sunday in an armed confrontation with the security forces.

Tariq Javed, a member of the MQM negotiation team, told AFP that the party was not withdrawing from the talks process, nor should the action be considered a boycott of the talks.

"We are postponing our presence at the talks until the government responds to our charges," he added.

Earlier this week, the head of the MQM negotiating team, Aijaz Dohi, announced that the MQM would not abandon the talks despite the fact that they were stagnating. The party has repeatedly said the government is "not sincere" in holding the talks.

Mr. Dohi said the decision not to attend the talks was taken shortly before the team's scheduled departure for Islamabad. No new date has been set.

Meanwhile, there were reports of sporadic inci-

dents of arson after the MQM decision was announced. Four people have been killed in separate incidents of violence in Karachi since Monday.

The MQM represents Urdu-speaking migrants from India after partition of subcontinent in 1947. Talks between the government and the MQM on restoring peace in the troubled commercial capital of Karachi began on July 11 but have not achieved any concrete results.

More than 1,400 people have died here in religious and political violence this year.

The government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto blames the MQM for much of the violence in Karachi. The party denies its involvement, blaming the unrest on the alleged government discrimination against the Mohajir community.

Spying in Norway as strong as in cold war — intelligence chief

OSLO (AFP) — Foreign spies are as active in Norway today as during the cold war, with informants trying harder than ever to get their hands on military and political secrets, the head of Norway's intelligence services said.

In an interview with the Norwegian daily Arbeiderbladet Tuesday, Hans Olav Oestgaard said that "foreign espionage operations in Norway have intensified significantly" recently.

"The end of the cold war has had little effect on foreign espionage," Mr. Oestgaard said.

Norwegian industry also has much to fear from the foreign agents, notably in sectors such as the oil industry where Norwegian companies are on the cut-

ting edge of new technology, he said.

Mr. Oestgaard said Norwegian authorities are currently "working very hard at fighting illegal espionage" in the country.

He would not say which countries are spying on Norway.

According to Arbeiderbladet, Russia is among the countries that has strengthened its espionage operations in Oslo — a successful agent formerly stationed in the United States has been assigned to Russia's embassy in the Norwegian capital, the paper said.

In 1994, the Iranian consul in Oslo, Mohammad Movahed, was expelled from the country for engaging in espionage against the Iranian exile community.

And in 1992, Russia's third secretary in Oslo, Viktor Fedik — an officer in Russia's military espionage service GRU — was expelled for trying to recruit a Norwegian to supply information on foreign students in Oslo.

The majority of agents kicked out of Norway have been from the former Soviet Union — since 1945, 47 alleged Soviet agents have been expelled.

Former KGB chief Leonid Sheharshin said recently in an interview with Arbeiderbladet that the KGB concentrated its work in Oslo in the late 1980's on acquiring secret NATO documents.

Mr. Sheharshin was the head of the KGB's foreign espionage from 1989 to 1991.

The report never named Mr. Juppe, but the study was requested by Socialist lawmakers after the investigative newspaper Le Canard Enchaîné in June published a 1993 letter by Mr. Juppe asking city officials that his son's rent be reduced. Mr. Juppe was Paris finance director at the time.

Mr. Juppe had his son's rent reduced about 30 per cent lower than market rates but has argued he did the same for other renters as a way to control rent inflation.

Inquiry shows Juppe cut son's rent illegally

PARIS (AP) — A French anti-corruption panel has indicated that conservative Prime Minister Alain Juppe likely broke the law when he intervened to cut the rent on his son's city-owned apartment, a newspaper reported.

While Justice Minister Jacques Toubon Sunday said the government panel's findings would be only consultative, the study was the latest setback for Mr. Juppe as his poll ratings sank to new lows and his budget plan came under fire.

The prosecutor's office Monday said its July 11

decision remained unchanged. That it would not open a formal investigation since the rental contract was signed by Mr. Juppe's son Laureot and not the prime minister himself.

But in a 10-page report France's top anti-corruption investigator Bernard Challe and his panel said an official abuses power when taking an interest in an apartment "simply in a moral or familial manner." The centre-left daily Le Monde said in its Tuesday edition released Monday afternoon and widely reported in the media.

The report never named Mr. Juppe, but the study was requested by Socialist lawmakers after the investigative newspaper Le Canard Enchaîné in June published a 1993 letter by Mr. Juppe asking city officials that his son's rent be reduced. Mr. Juppe was Paris finance director at the time.

Mr. Juppe had his son's rent reduced about 30 per cent lower than market rates but has argued he did the same for other renters as a way to control rent inflation.

Home alone for Macaulay Culkin isn't just a movie

New York (AP) — Even at age 15, Macaulay Culkin apparently can't be left home alone. The actor and his siblings have been throwing wild parties while their parents are locked in a bitter child-custody battle, according to friends and neighbours quoted in the New York Post. They said the Home Alone star has been living it up while his parents are locked in a bitter child-custody battle. The six Culkin kids, ages 6 to 19, live with their mother in three apartments in the same building. On a recent Saturday, Macaulay and two brothers — 12-year-old Kieran and 19-year-old Shane — threw a beer party in the apartment they share. The Post quoted a source as saying. Some neighbours won't allow their kids to play with the show-biz brood "because there was alcohol, and the kids are unsupervised," said neighbour Lorna Buody, whose 14-year-old daughter, actress Laura Bundy, was a childhood playmate of Macaulay's. Laura, who has a role in the upcoming film Jumanji with Robin Williams, can see her old friend only in her own apartment. A call to Macaulay's publicist, Cynthia Parsons, was not immediately returned. The three younger children are supervised by a nanny hired by their mother, Patricia Breotrup, "but the older boys have no supervision," Ms. Bundy said. Ms. Breotrup and the children's father, Kit Culkin, who were never married, are braced for a trial starting Dec. 4 to settle who should have permanent custody — and professional control — over the brood.

Jackson seeks to merge publishing interests with Sony Music

LONDON (AFP) — U.S. pop star Michael Jackson is in negotiations to merge his publishing interests with those of his record label, Sony Music, the Financial Times reported Tuesday. The paper said that Jackson — who owns the rights to a number of music catalogues including the songs of the Beatles, Little Richard and Elvis Presley — could merge his publishing company, ATV music, with Sony's Music publishing subsidiary. Jackson would then become a major shareholder in the new company, the paper said. The entire ATV catalogue — some 4,000 songs — was valued at \$500 million in 1993 when Jackson sold the rights to administer it to EMI Music Publishing, according to the paper. Publishing is a lucrative area in the music market. Publishers receive royalties each time music is sold as a compact disc or cassette. They are also paid if it is performed in public.

Bogus controller could crash planes — report

LONDON (R) — A bogus air traffic controller is sending false messages to planes that could put them on a collision course, pilots said. "He is risking the lives of thousands, not only on aircraft taking off and landing but the lives of people on the ground," pilots' union chief Chris Dark told the Sunday Mirror newspaper. Pilots at the British Airports of Manchester and Newcastle reported a male voice transmitting false messages to aircraft coming in to land. The hacker used equipment that can apparently be bought legally and cheaply. "The man doing this obviously has some knowledge of aircraft procedures. I cannot emphasise enough how dangerous his actions are," Mr. Dark said. "The authorities must act now, track this lunatic down and exact a very heavy punishment," said Dark, general secretary of the British Airline Pilots Association.

Ailing China dissident cleared for U.S. treatment

BEIJING (R) — Leading Shanghai dissident Yang Zhou, unexpectedly paroled from a labour camp in July, plans to leave Wednesday for New York to seek treatment for a throat tumour, his wife said Tuesday.

Mr. Yang's wife, Li Guoping, said by telephone from Shanghai, that after months of frustrations and false starts she believed all obstacles had been cleared for their departure.

"We've met many times with the public security authorities, including this morning, and do not expect anything besides the ordinary procedures at the airport," Ms. Li said.

Mr. Yang's imminent departure for the United States comes at a time of serious diplomatic friction in Sino-U.S. relations.

Beijing has accused Washington of "convinced" with forces seeking to split Taiwan and Tibet from Chinese sovereignty, despite U.S. policy calling both regions part of China.

Washington remains the world's leading critic of China's human rights record and has pressed Beijing to free dissidents regarded as prisoners of conscience.

As has been the case with the handful of other outspoken dissidents allowed to travel abroad, Beijing pressured Mr. Yang and his wife to keep a low profile and not to embarrass China.

"The authorities told us to keep our distance from foreign journalists, among other things," Ms. Li said.

Mr. Yang, a longtime campaigner for more democracy, civil liberties and the rule of law, in 1978 co-founded the Association for Human Rights in Shanghai, which officials in China's biggest city have refused to grant legal status.

He was one of thousands of activists rounded up after troops crushed pro-democracy protests in Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, and has angered Beijing by mounting anniversary activities commemorating the hundreds killed in the crackdown.

In the nine weeks since Mr. Yang's sudden parole on July 15, just a year into a three-year labour camp sentence, authorities have rejected invitations for him to be treated at both Columbia University and New York University.

In the end, it was a friend of Mr. Yang's father who read a news story about the couple's difficulties and provided an invitation.

Clinton sees big stakes riding on 1996 election

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton, revving up his political engines, said Monday he saw his reelection bid as even more crucial than his 1992 run for the presidency because his would-be successors offered "destructive" visions.

"Four years ago, I ran because I thought there was no action being taken to give us a new economic policy ... Now I think the alternative vision out there is destructive of the future we want," he said.

Mr. Clinton, who is not yet an avowed candidate for a second term in the White House, said in an interview with newspaper journalists he was confident about his chances at the polls next year because voters were starting to look at his record.

He said one of the reasons for the remarkable ups and downs of his trouble-plagued presidency was "if you do things, you've got to make people mad".

In what seemed to be a veiled jab at the conservative talk show hosts who have pounded him repeatedly, Mr. Clinton said if one's critics had access to radio and television programmes and other channels of communications, "they will go wacky and they will generate animosity".

The interview took place over a luncheon celebrating the 80th birthday of Godfrey Sperling, a longtime political reporter for the Christian Science Monitor, and focused on the 1996 election campaign.

Mr. Clinton, who spent five days last week in a cross-country campaign fundraising trip, said the policies he put in place over the last two-and-one half years were showing results.

"It's been a stormy time for the country, but if you look at what has been accomplished, I think the record has been good for America and will be good for our future," he said.

The 49-year-old president said the main difference between him and his Republican critics is over the extent of people's obligations to try to help one another.

"I think that if their view prevails, it may be more like the '20s than the '30s," he said, referring to the 1920s, an era when rapacious free-market policies sowed the seeds of an economic failure that led to the great depression.

He recalled that congressional Republicans voted so massive against his economic programme, saying it would bring recession, and that "instead we had the best economic performance we've had in two or three decades".

He also noted that the U.S. crime rate was declining. Mr. Clinton, in an ebullient state of mind after an admitted period of self-doubt following his Democratic Party's disastrous losses in the 1994 congressional and gubernatorial elections, said he thought the voters were taking notice.

"Last November, plainly the country was in kind of an anxious mood, a negative mood, a frustrated mood about the government," he said.

Now, Mr. Clinton continued, "I think the country is sort of moving into a more positive frame of mind as we see more and more economic good news, and as we see more and more evidence that some of the problems we thought can't be solved, you can actually make progress on them."

Chinese leaders hold fall meeting amid usual secrecy

BEIJING (AP) — China's 220 most powerful Communist Party officials are meeting to set the nation's economic agenda for the next five years and punish one of their number for alleged corruption.

Important as the meeting is, officials and the state-run media are keeping silent about it, illustrating how secretive the ruling party remains despite the increased openness of the economy and society as a whole.

Glimpses of the party's workings mostly come through back-door channels: Informed Chinese who don't want to be quoted by name and the Beijing-connected Hoog Kong media.

According to those sources, the party's policy-setting Central Committee began its annual fall coclave Monday at a hotel on the capital's west side.

Bones provide missing link in Haiti rights probe

PORT-AU-PRINCE (R)

— With chisels in hand, a team of forensic anthropologists has been digging at sites across Haiti this month, quietly unearthing human bones that provide

missing testimony to one of the ugliest chapters in the Caribbean nation's history.

The researchers, sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, hope the excavated human remains will provide an important link in determining culpability for human rights abuses committed during the three-year dictatorship by military leaders who overthrew democratically elected Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and forced him into exile.

International human rights observers have charged that some 4,000 Haitians, most of them Aristide supporters, were killed during the coup years.

The international team, whose members' hand led digs at mass grave sites in Argentina, El Salvador and Ethiopia, are leading a hunt to Haiti's Presidential Commission on Truth and Justice.

Charged with shedding light on the thousands of executions, disappearances and other acts of torture carried out by security forces during the military regime of General Raoul Cedras, the Truth Commission is out to a tribunal and its findings do not carry the weight of a conviction.

But officials said the inquiries are important in setting the record straight.

"What we are doing here is what a police officer would do in, say, a scene investigation," explained Karen Burns, a forensic anthropologist at the University of Georgia who is participating in the one-month dig.

The carefully exhumed bone fragments, fibers, hair and clothing remains are brought back to a lab at the capital Port-Au-Prince's State University Hospital where they are analysed to determine identity and manner of death.

A pelvic bone can reveal a person's gender with 90 per cent accuracy, the investigators said, and a long bone such as a femur can be used to estimate an individual's height.



Doctors attend two seriously injured people at a hospital in New Delhi where two bombs went off as thousands of Hindus were celebrating a religious festival (AFP photo)

Sikh separatists say they planted Delhi bombs

NEW DELHI (R) — The Khalistan Liberation Force, a militant group fighting for a separate Sikh nation in northern India, claimed responsibility for a series of bomb blasts in Delhi, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said Tuesday.

PTI said it received a handwritten statement from the group threatening to explode more devices in the Indian capital, where two bombs went off Monday night, injuring 46 people, two of them seriously.

A third bomb exploded at a railway crossing in north-west Delhi Tuesday morning, slightly injuring a child, but police said the blast appeared to be unconnected to the two earlier explosions.

PTI said the Khalistan Liberation Force statement was delivered to its office in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir state. Punjab, the home state of the Sikhs, is adjacent to Jammu and Kashmir.

The news agency said the organisation claimed the bombs were triggered by remote control.

A fourth explosion in a town about 100 kilometres

north of Delhi Tuesday injured seven people, PTI said.

Meanwhile police drafted in reinforcements to guard Hindu festival celebrations in the Indian capital Tuesday after the two small bombs exploded in the area.

Police said the bombs Monday night were placed on the road by the Ram Lila grounds, an area of barren land outside Delhi's historic Red Fort used for political rallies and the enactment of the Hindu epics during the festival season which has just begun.

"We are preparing for the evening when the Ram Lila will be celebrated. We are strengthening the perimeter of the ground with more police," Assistant Police Commissioner Mohan Kudasia told Reuters.

The nearby Chandni Chowk area, a warren of alleys and lanes full of markets and bazaars in the heart of the old city, was packed with evening shoppers when the bombs went off. A circus was playing under a big top erected outside the Red Fort.

"We have made no arrests so far. There are no suspects," Kudasia said.

U.S. supports Japan, Germany in reformed Security Council

UNITED NATIONS (AFP)

— U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has said he wants Japan and Germany to be part of a reformed U.N. Security Council, and that how the United Nations is run needs far-reaching change.

Mr. Christopher, one of the first speakers opening debate at the 50th session of the U.N. General Assembly, blasted the bloated U.N. bureaucracy and criticised fiscal waste but said Washington was committed to maintaining its financial obligations.

"The U.N.'s bureaucracy should be smaller, with a clear organisational structure and sharp lines of responsibility," he said. "The U.N. must not tolerate ethical or financial abuses and its managers should be appointed and promoted on the basis of merit."

ly represented, without making the Council unwieldy," Mr. Christopher said.

He said the role of the United Nations had changed greatly in recent years to have to respond to the challenges of humanitarian emergencies, civil wars and health epidemics.

"This evolution has placed great strains on the organisation, and revealed the necessity for far-reaching change in how it is run," Mr. Christopher said.

"When money is wasted in New York, Geneva or Vienna and when time is lost to bureaucratic inertia, the people who pay the price are those most vulnerable to famine, disease and violence," he said.

The United States owes the United Nations \$1.4 billion for its regular budget and peacekeeping assessments, which are about one-quarter and one-third of the total respectively. It pays late every year.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright had said Friday that the U.S. Congress — which wants to make further cuts to an already pared-down U.N. contribution — would be more forthcoming if the United Nations showed further reforms.

Security Council reform has been a hot topic for the last three years, and diplomats expect a change within one to two years.

Germany and Japan are the leading contenders for an expanded "permanent five" — which includes Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — but many countries have complained that such a composition would leave out the southern hemisphere and developing world.

"We should ensure that all the world's regions are fairly represented, without making the Council unwieldy," Mr. Christopher said.

He said the role of the United Nations had changed greatly in recent years to have to respond to the challenges of humanitarian emergencies, civil wars and health epidemics.

"This evolution has placed great strains on the organisation, and revealed the necessity for far-reaching change in how it is run," Mr. Christopher said.

"When money is wasted in New York, Geneva or Vienna and when time is lost to bureaucratic inertia, the people who pay the price are those most vulnerable to famine, disease and violence," he said.

committees and councils, having more accountability for money spent, and discontinuing large U.N. conferences until the recommendations of the previous ones can be acted upon.

Mr. Christopher repeated the areas for reform during his speech.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali, speaking at an official luncheon after Mr. Christopher's speech, took the opportunity to fight back.

His officials have repeatedly stressed the harm to the organisation caused by late and non-payments, and said the finances of the United Nations remain in crisis.

"And now is the time to break the cycle in which inadequate resources lead to inadequate results — which in turn are used to justify the withholding of resources," he said, in clear reference to Washington's late payments.

"Now is the time to give support to those who must take the most difficult decisions for reform," Dr. Ghali said, adding that "the United Nations cannot be taken for granted."

On another matter, Mr. Christopher repeated a call to the U.S. Senate to ratify the chemical weapons convention "and to stop holding it and the START II treaty hostage to unrelated issues."

Mr. Christopher also lauded the Palestinian-Israeli agreement Sunday to transfer control of territory in the occupied West Bank to its Arab residents. It is to be done formally in a White House ceremony Thursday.

"Another historic milestone will be marked this Thursday in Washington

when Israel and the Palestinians sign their agreement to implement phase two of the declaration of principles," he said. "That agreement will bring to life a goal first set in the Camp David accords — that is, to protect Israel's security and to give Palestinians throughout the West Bank control over their daily lives."

"Japan Tuesday welcomed Mr. Christopher's remarks suggesting expanding the number of permanent seats on the Security Council to include Germany and Japan."

A Foreign Ministry official said Japan is prepared to discharge its responsibilities if named a permanent member of the Security Council under a proposed reform of the U.N. framework.

The ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Japanese Foreign Minister Yohsei Kono would make similar suggestions in his address at the Assembly later Tuesday. In a separate development, France told critics of its nuclear tests Monday they were aimed at paving the way for its adherence to a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty next year.

"Tests will be limited to eight at the maximum and will be completed by the end of May 1996," Ambassador Jean-Michel Gausson told the General Assembly.

He was exercising his right of reply, at the end of the day, to several speakers who had criticised France and China for continuing to carry out underground nuclear tests.

time I saw flames erupting from the motorcycle," he told reporters from his hospital bed.

Police said many of the victims were suffering from shrapnel wounds below the waist.

"The first thing that hit me was the deafening sound," Sumit, a 17-year-old student told reporters.

"I was lucky that moments before the blast I got off my motorcycle to check why the road ahead was blocked. I had barely walked a few paces when the explosion occurred."

"My friend was trapped underneath the bike which was in flames. The entire pavement and the road was flooded with injured people. Many had lost consciousness," he added.

Policeman Naresh Prakash told the Pioneer newspaper: "I was standing near the entrance of the (circus) tent when I heard a big bang."

"Amid the cacophony of crackers and songs on loudspeakers, I thought it was a loud cracker that had been burst. But then I heard people shrieking and I rushed towards the spot."

Tahiti uneasy before 2nd French nuclear test

PAPEETE, French Polynesia (R) — Shopkeepers in the tourist paradise of Tahiti are taking up arms and hiring private security guards ahead of a second controversial French nuclear weapons test expected within the next 10 days.

But independence leaders and French officials say they doubt there will be an outbreak of rioting on the scale of the rampage by poor Polynesian youths that devastated Papeete on Sept. 6, the day after the first underground test at Mururoa Atoll.

"Nothing will happen after the second test if the demonstrators keep a low profile," said Oscar Temaru, leader of the Tavini Huiraatira Independence Movement.

France flew several hundred paramilitary gendarmes and CRS riot police to the South Pacific island after hundreds of rioters overwhelmed the thinly

staffed, ill-organised security forces earlier this month.

The president of the territorial executive, Gaston Flosse, just back from talks in Paris, said he was opposed to local businessmen forming private militias and taking the law into their own hands.

"We must leave the state authorities to do their work and defend us," Mr. Flosse told a news conference.

But he added: "However, I am not hostile to the idea of an organisation or associations for passive defence, just as there are companies that supply security guards to chief executives or to protect public buildings. We already use their services."

Mr. Flosse said the Sept. 6 riots had done damage officially estimated at 209 million francs (\$40 million), including 55 million (\$11 million) to repair the main airport terminal which was burned down.

Some 19 other buildings

went up in flames and many shops were looted in the orgy of violence that began in the poor Fa'a'a shantytown close to the airport, 24 hours after the first French nuclear test beneath Mururoa, 1200 Kilometres away.

Despite the calls for caution, some businessmen are arming themselves to defend their shops and homes if necessary.

"I keep my rifle close to hand. I also have two machetes. My son and I are not afraid of the hooligans. Let them come" one Papeete jeweller said.

Shopkeepers have formed a "passive defence organisation" to protect their property, but some say it may not remain passive if violence erupts again.

Yet the mood in Papeete appears less tense than before the first test, partly because the huge international media presence has been scaled down.

Some Polynesians say Mr. Temaru and his party lost support over the riots, which the French authorities blamed partly on a pro-independence trade union leader now in custody.

"I used to be a sympathiser, but after what happened, I'm finished with the independence movement," an office worker said.

A fisherman on the port of Papeete said the rioters had picked on the wrong targets. "If they had burned down the army headquarters or the high commissioner's office, I could understand that, but it's not the people of Papeete or the tourists who are responsible for the (nuclear) bomb," he said.

Mr. Flosse said he had been told in Paris that France would complete its final series of six to eight tests by the end of March, two months earlier than initially envisaged.

Police stop protest against U.S. arms to Pakistan

NEW DELHI (R) — Police fired water cannon Tuesday to disperse about 2,000 demonstrators from the youth wing of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress Party protesting against a U.S. arms package for Pakistan.

About 150 police manning barricades prevented demonstrators from the Indian Youth Congress from approaching the U.S. embassy in the Indian capital.

The president of the Indian Youth Congress, Maninderjit Singh Bittu, was allowed through the barricade, about one kilometre from the U.S. embassy, and said he intended to present a letter to the embassy addressed to President Bill Clinton.

The letter, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters, called on Mr. Clinton to "stall" the \$368 million arms sale package for Pakistan which the U.S. Senate approved last week.

"There is great resentment in the minds of Indian people due to this unfortunate step taken by U.S. Senate," the letter said.

"Political leaders cutting across their party lines have unanimously condemned this action and the whole country stands united to express their anger and anguish over this arms package offered to Pakistan."

The demonstrators shouted "Clinton, shame, shame" and "Pakistan, shame, shame" as they tried to scale the metal

barricades.

Sanjay Chandok, spokesman for the Indian Youth Congress, accused Pakistan of having a hand in two bomb blasts that injured at least 46 people in Delhi Monday.

"We will not tolerate the continued interference of Pakistan," he told Reuters. "The bomb blasts were another version of increasing terrorist activities in India by Pakistan. We will not tolerate the U.S. providing arms and help to Pakistan."

The Senate vote permitted Pakistan to take delivery of missiles and other military equipment held up by sanctions imposed in 1990 when then-President George Bush declined to certify that Pakistan did not have nuclear weapons.

Last week the Foreign Ministry said the arms package could trigger an arms race in South Asia. India and Pakistan have fought three wars since independence in 1947.

"History has shown that whenever the arms and ammunition have been supplied to Pakistan by the United States, they have specifically been used against India," Mr. Bittu's letter to Mr. Clinton said.

India claims Pakistan arms and trains separatist guerrillas in Kashmir, but Islamabad denies the charge, saying it provides only moral and diplomatic support.

ICRC: Only total ban can halt landmine deaths

VIENNA (R) — The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Tuesday called for a total ban on land mines and described the West's proposals to limit their use to "smart" mines as highly dangerous.

ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga said restricting the use of the weapons to so-called "smart" mines which self-destruct after a short time limit would set back attempts to halt the deaths and injuries of thousands of people every year.

"We think this is extremely dangerous because it will be difficult to have assurances that these 'intelligent' mines will really work," Mr. Sommaruga told Reuters.

The ICRC chief was due to address a review conference on a 1980 treaty on conventional weapons which aims to limit the use and production of anti-personnel mines across the world.

Mr. Sommaruga said it would be much easier for the international community to spot mine fields if their deployment was completely outlawed.

"If you allow 'intelligent' mines then there has to be surveillance of what sort of mines are being used. A whole mechanism will have to be introduced to check," he said.

The United States and several Western countries are backing proposals to ban old-style land mines, so-called "dumb" mines, that can lie undetected for years after a conflict has ended.

"Smart" mines have a short life span and are designed to deactivate automatically.

Mr. Sommaruga said the ICRC was one of the frontline organisations which had to deal with the deaths and maiming caused by anti-personnel mines in former war zones.

"In the past 10 years our surgical teams have treated more than 200,000 victims of mines," he said.

"They have fitted 80,000 people with artificial limbs and you have to remember that that is our organisation alone. There are others dealing with the casualties."

The greatest number of victims were not soldiers, but women and children, and farmers who had little choice but to till land that was once a battlefield, he said.

"Children have a tendency to play with what is strange. They see these devices, play with them and then they explode," Mr. Sommaruga added.

He said the greatest carnage was evident in Cambodia, Afghanistan and Angola.

"But it is not limited to Africa and Asia. We have mine crises in Europe too, in the Caucasus and in former Yugoslavia," he said.

"There is even a problem in areas between Ecuador and Peru following their border conflict earlier this year."

The United Nations estimates there to be 110 million live land mines yet to be located in some 64 countries.

Humanitarian groups, charities and non-governmental organisations are also pressing for a total ban on booby-trap devices and new, high-tech arms such as laser weapons that can cause permanent blindness.

The conference aims to pass a new document prohibiting laser weapons that are solely used to blind the enemy but the ban will not cover the deployment of laser beams on the battlefield against such targets as electro-optical devices.

Tension grips north Sri Lanka amid fears of battles

COLOMBO (AFP) — Tension has gripped Sri Lanka's embattled northern Jaffna peninsula amid fears of a massive military onslaught against the Tamil Tiger guerrillas ahead of monsoon rains, travellers from the region said Tuesday.

Fears of a renewed offensive have been heightened by a series of air force attacks on suspected targets inside Jaffna, the stronghold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels, they said.

"People are expecting another offensive any time now. There is a lot of tension in Jaffna," a Tamil civilian told reporters after crossing rebel lines and arriving at the government-held town of Vavuniya Tuesday.

The LTTE's official organ, the Inside Report, said the security forces were pouring thousands of men and heavy guns into the peninsula, the symbol of Tamil separatism, to launch an operation before monsoon rains this month or early

October.

"A major military offensive on the Jaffna peninsula seems to be imminent. In that eventuality, a major showdown between the LTTE's combat formations and the Sri Lankan Armed Forces is unavoidable," the latest issue of Inside Report said.

The government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga slapped censorship on all military-related reports Thursday but lifted restrictions on foreign correspondents late Monday.

"I hope the foreign press will continue to act with restraint and understand the need for us to have censorship for the local press," Information Director Ariya Rubasinghe said.

Chief censor Edmond Jayasinghe said the censorship, imposed for the first time in six years, was aimed at preventing publication locally of war-related reports that could harm security forces and national interests.

He said there had been

instances when battle plans were published in the Sunday papers even before the operations could get underway properly.

Tamil travellers from Jaffna said that about 50 people were killed and nearly 100 wounded in the latest air force action in Jaffna. The Defence Ministry Monday expressed regret if civilians were among the victims.

"The government is not in a position to verify the accuracy of the Tiger claims of civilian casualties or as to the possible source of such casualties," he said.

"However, if any of these casualties have been caused unintentionally in the course of the attacks carried out by the air force, it is deeply regretted," the ministry said in a statement.

The humanitarian organisation, Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders, MSF) said Monday that more than 40 people died in the government offensive against Tamil separatists in the island's north.

The dead included 34 children aged under 12, the charity said, correcting figures given by them over the weekend of about 100 dead in the two days of fighting last Thursday and Friday.

The group, which has doctors on the ground in the region, said 34 pupils near the town of Point Pedro died when a school of 500 students was hit by artillery fire.

The LTTE, in a statement issued from its London office, claimed that 71 people were killed and another 100 were injured in the school bombing alone.

The one-page LTTE statement said security forces intensified aerial bombing and shelling within hours of the Colombo government slapping the censorship on all reports relating to the ethnic war.

The LTTE's 23-year-old insurgency against the majority Sinhalese government has left more than 50,000 dead, according to most estimates.

Bogus controller could crash planes—report

Association

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Readying for new phase

WITH THE Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel having reached agreement on the expansion of Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories, the Arab-Israeli peace process has entered a new and critical phase upon which the prospect of attaining a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East will largely depend.

Success in implementing the fresh accord is a responsibility that not only Israel but the whole international community should shoulder. The influential powers in the world must live up to the promises they made to the Palestinian leadership in order to enable it to rehabilitate the Palestinian economy, which has been crippled by about three decades of occupation. So must Israel facilitate the work of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) by dealing with the Palestinians in the mentality of a peace-seeking nation and not that of an occupier. That means no more arbitrary arrests, no more confiscation of land and no more reneging on commitments. The PNA's role in ensuring the success of the Taba deal is instrumental, to say the least.

The agreement represents an important first step towards building a Palestinian state. But this state should be constructed on strong foundations that transcend personalities and correspond with the aspirations of all Palestinians for a democratic country in which the rule of the law prevails. The PNA must build institutions that can safeguard the cause of political pluralism and democracy and ensure continuity in the policies of the state to be.

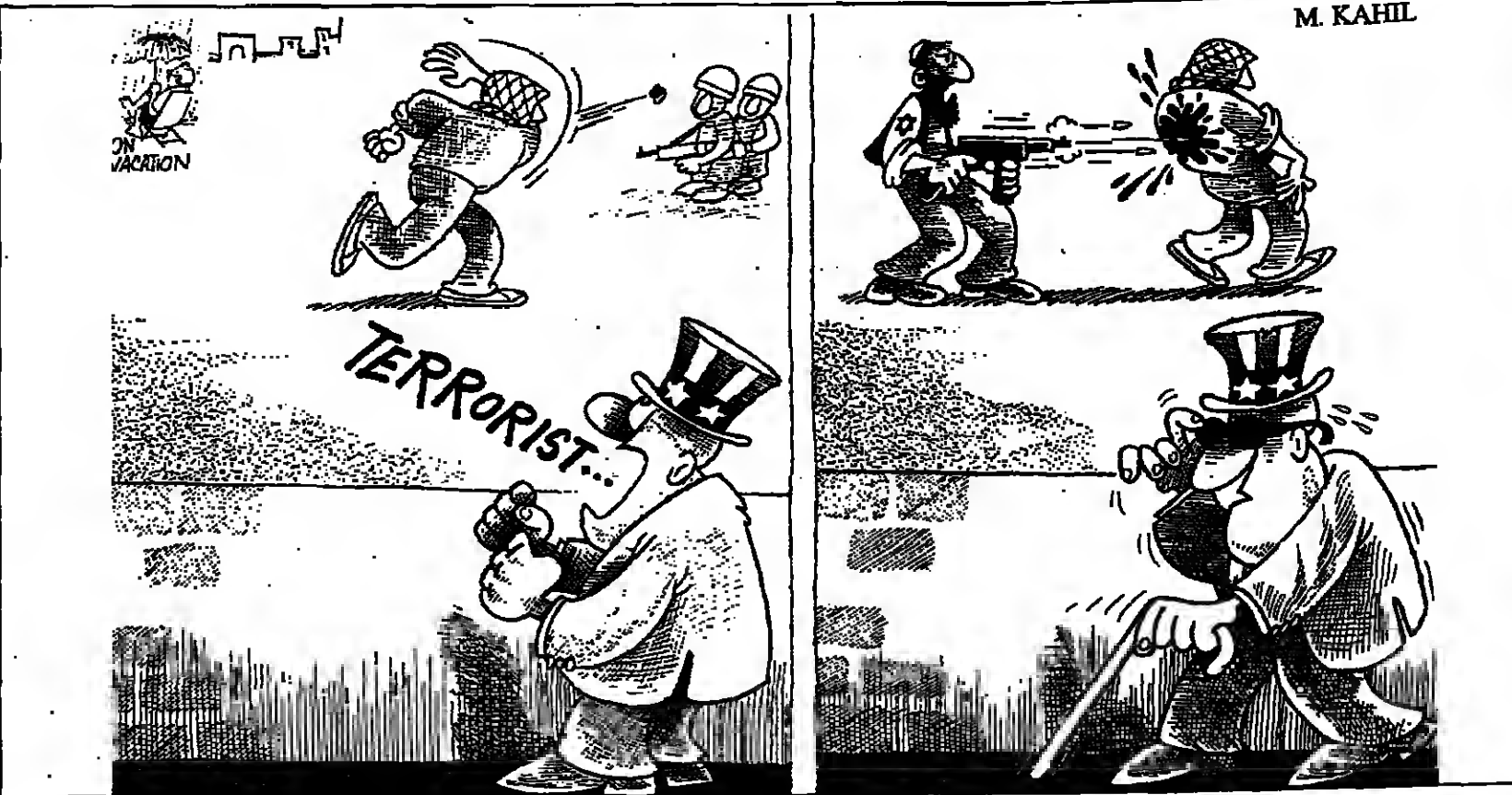
There is no doubt that a democratic Palestinian state will realise that its long term interests can best be served by maintaining good ties with its Arab neighbours, especially Jordan, for obvious reasons.

The fruits of coordination with Jordan were best demonstrated during the tortuous talks that led to the Taba agreement. PNA President Yasser Arafat did in fact acknowledge the impact the intervention of His Majesty King Hussein in the negotiations had on solving the problems facing the Palestinian delegation to the talks with the Israelis, particularly the issue of Hebron. Jordan has left no doubt about its commitment to helping the Palestinian people and the events of the last few years have shown the respect with which the international community, including Israel, have for Jordan. A closer Jordanian-Palestinian coordination is definitely mutually beneficial to both sides. Such coordination is urgently needed at this juncture, especially also in view of the enormous challenges that will continue to face the region as a whole.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING on the initialing of the agreement between the Palestinians and Israel for expanding self-rule to the West Bank, a writer in Al Ra'i said the implementation of the accord was more important than the agreement itself. The accord, said Mahmoud Riwawi, will encounter many obstacles and difficulties even after it is officially signed in Washington. The writer said it remained to be seen whether Israel will remain committed to the agreement and keen on implementing it. The Israelis are known to be slow in honouring agreements with Arabs, the writer said, adding that the 18 months needed for the implementation of the new accord could be jeopardised by confrontations between the Jewish settlers living in the heart of Hebron and Palestinians in the city. The writer said the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) should start preparations now for the final status negotiations, which cover such questions as refugees and the status of Jerusalem. The Palestinians require the skill and efficiency of qualified politicians and academics specialising in international law to help them achieve the aspired goal, added the writer. The task facing the Palestinian National Authority is much greater ever and requires all the efficiency and skills that can be mustered, the writer said.

ANOTHER writer in Al Ra'i paid tribute to Japan for its continued assistance to Jordan and the Japanese-Jordanian relationship, which he said, constitutes one of the main elements of regional stability. Hussein Abu Rumman said that no doubt financial and economic assistance by Japan is bound to help ensure sustainable development which is a vital component of a lasting peace. Referring to the Japanese prime minister's recent visit to Jordan and other countries in the region, the writer said that it clearly reflected Tokyo's interests at the economic and political levels while Tokyo's participation to the multilateral phase of the peace process demonstrates Japan's keenness on ensuring peace in an area which continually supplies the Japanese industry with oil.



Washington Watch

The war against the PLO continues

By Dr. James Zogby

IN THE halls of the U.S. Congress, the war against the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) continues. A recent visit to the battlefield showed a most unpretty sight.

With only 24 hours notice, I was invited to testify before a House Committee on International Relations hearing on the Middle East peace process. I was the only Arab-American present, and of the other nine groups invited to give testimony, eight were Jewish. The final group invited to testify called itself the Christian Israel Public Affairs Committee.

The tone of the hearings was completely out of touch with the political realities of the peace process. The issues raised, the allegations made, and the questions asked were so utterly bizarre and fantastic that the session might have been funny — if it were not for the fact that the impact that the U.S. Congress has on policy can be deadly serious. The purpose of the hearings, it appeared, was not to gain information on the peace process but to discredit the PLO and end U.S. financial support for Palestinians.

The statements made by the members of Congress at the opening of the hearings shared a set of common themes. Among them: Israel has honoured the peace accord while the Palestinians have not; The Palestine National Authority (PNA) has misused U.S. aid; and, therefore, Congress ought to pass new legislation suspending economic assistance to the Palestinians.

While a number of members of Congress spoke, the statements of three sponsors of a bill to stop U.S. aid are worthy of special attention. What was intriguing about the comments of Republican Congressman Michael Forbes (PNY), Jim Saxton (NJ) and Tom Delay (TX) (all Republicans) as well, was their unbridled contempt for the PLO and the PNA. Their speeches were filled with disinformation and betrayed an astounding ignorance. Pro-Likud groups in Israel and

the U.S. had supplied the speakers with "documentation" of alleged Palestinian violations of the declaration of principles (DoP) on which they based their arguments.

But it was not only the case that the members of Congress sought to make that was disturbing — it was also the disregard for truth and disrespect for the Palestinian leadership they demonstrated in making that case.

Listening to their arguments about just one issue, such as the use of U.S. funds by the PLO, sounded more like a bad story than a U.S. congressman speaking about a real situation. Congressman Forbes' words may serve as an example. "Despite a lifetime of mistrust of the PLO and revulsion toward their terrorist tactics," Mr. Forbes told the committee:

"I originally supported the Clinton administration's promise of U.S. assistance to the Palestinians. It is an open secret that the PLO is systematically violating the accord, yet U.S. taxpayer money continues to flow, much of directly to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and his cronies.... I can't explain this to my constituents, nor can I bear to watch an unrepentant enemy of Israel be built up with our money, posing a future threat to our ally...."

"It is nothing short of scandalous that U.S. taxpayer money continues to flow to Arafat and his anti-Israel allies.... Our ally Israel has made strenuous efforts to live up to its commitments made at Oslo (while the PLO is systematically violating virtually all of the Oslo principles...."

Congressman Jim Saxton (R-NJ) and Tom Delay (R-TX) made many of the same arguments, but also made repeated reference to what they termed "S\$00 million in American aid to the PLO."

Congressman Saxton argued that "American taxpayers have a right to know where their foreign aid money is going.... This aid money was never intended to be used for bribes for loyalists to Yasser Arafat." Mr. Saxton therefore called for new legislation "before we extend another S\$2 billion to the PLO, given our domestic concerns...."

Even a casual observer of the peace process could not be puzzled by such a total distortion of reality. In fact, the U.S. is not giving \$500 million to the PNA, and members of Congress who actually voted on the legislation should be expected to know that. The U.S. gives \$75 million a year and has committed to this amount for five years, for a total of \$375 million. The other \$125 million of Mr. Saxton's figure is not real money at all. It is a U.S. commitment to underwrite loan guarantees from commercial banks to private U.S. companies with approved projects — and to this day the agency charged with honouring this pledge has not yet approved a single project.

The \$75 million annual U.S. commitment does not go to the PNA, in fact, it goes to the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID). AID then disburses the money according to priorities the determine are fitting with some of the money going to U.S. contractors with approved projects while another part of it goes to U.S. charitable organisations which do work in the West Bank and Gaza. And some of the funds go to U.S. consulting groups to perform studies and establish training programmes in Gaza and the West Bank.

A study has shown that about 20 of each of these dollars ends up being spent in the Palestinian lands, with the rest going to U.S. contractors. In the past years, some AID money has also gone to the World Bank fund established to pay the Palestinian police and other administrative costs. All of these funds are separately administered by international agencies.

No U.S. funds go to the PNA or the PLO directly. And according to a written statement sent to Congress by AID, the Agency is convinced that there is total accounting for all U.S. dollar spent.

In other words, U.S. aid to the Palestinians is administered in the same manner as all U.S. foreign aid — except, of course, U.S. aid to Israel is the only country to receive U.S. aid in cash with no accounting required.

During my testimony I asked that the members of Congress since they were so concerned with accountability and their constituents' concerns in a time of domestic hardship, would they not think it advisable to apply the same standard of accountability and compliance to U.S. aid to Israel? Unsurprisingly, my suggestion was met with silence.

But, of course, just as the facts were of no particular concern at the hearings, neither was accountability. The agenda of those members of Congress who participated in this campaign was to discredit the PLO, end U.S. assistance to the Palestinians and, thereby, undercut the peace process itself.

It appears that these hearings were called in response to pressure from some members of the Congress and their pro-Israel supporters. Next week, Congress must vote on whether or not to continue U.S. aid to the Palestinians. And while the committee leadership wants to extend Palestinian aid, they feel sufficiently constrained by extremist elements to provide hearings in which an anti-Palestinian propaganda war can be waged.

During the hearings, the mainstream Jewish groups which testified were quite responsible. AIPAC (the well-known pro-Israel lobby), The American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress all spoke in defence of continuing Palestinian aid and in support of the Palestinian role in the peace process. But they were attacked by the more extremist groups and challenged by some of the members of the committee.

This split in the pro-Israel community is an important new fact of life in Washington and is one reason why the war against the PLO continues with such intensity. Israel may be trying to make peace with the PLO, but its pro-Likud politicians and their U.S. allies and the members of Congress they influence are clearly not

ready for any meaningful peace. Too many years of anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab rhetoric have built up in Washington, and many members of Congress find it easier to play by the old rules and appeal to the extremists than to adapt to the new to the extremists than to adopt to the new paradigm of the peace process.

A compounding factor is the failure of the administration to act more forcefully in challenging congressional distortions regarding both the Palestinians and the U.S.-Palestinian relationship. While some in the administration have spoken out at times, they also seem constrained by a wariness of challenging the extremists. And so the response is more timid than it ought to be, especially given the vehemence of the attacks.

A final critical factor that contributes to this lopsided war is the absence in Washington of any effective and official PLO representation.

The Jewish groups, fed by Israeli government sources or the Likud, come to their work with voluminous files and information: transcripts of Mr. Arafat's speeches, records of PLO correspondence, detailed accounts of PLO and PNA behaviour and statements — and it is from these that they make their anti-Palestinian propaganda.

We have repeatedly asked the PNA and PLO for a response, or for their own reports on Israeli compliance with the Oslo accord and Israeli behaviour. An official and institutional Palestinian presence in Washington is required, as is a Palestinian information strategy for the U.S. and the means to implement it.

Absent this, those of us who fight for peace and Palestinian rights do so with one arm tied behind our backs — and very much alone.

In the meantime, the distortions that pass as fact in Congress and, as a result, help shape U.S. policy, have a direct impact on the course of the peace process and on the efforts to win recognition of Palestinian rights and establish a comprehensive Middle East peace.

It Occurred to Me

By Ali Kassab

Nouveau riche of the year

THE CHANGE of seasons is always a melancholy time. As far as seasons go, summer in Jordan is particularly agreeable. The long days allow ample space for a leisurely siesta before bedtime, and the cool evenings are perfectly conducive to the noble occupation of idly reclining in an easy chair on a terrace, to indulge in gossip and scandal while fortifying oneself for the task at hand with long potatoes of some invigorating brew.

But the transition to autumn calls for reflection on seasons past, a dangerous occupation since man's brightest ideas come to him only when it is too late to do anything about them. Only now has it occurred to me that summer could be an occasion for sporting competition and rewarding excellence in a field where Jordanians manifest great resourcefulness: Garish weddings.

As if by an unwritten law, with the appearance of the first swallow, Jordanians roll up their sleeves, spit on their hands, and set about with remarkable application to organise weddings in the worst taste. Fortunes are devoted to that quest. Imagination roams rampant and produces stunning special effects.

As a permanent fixture on the terrace of a certain hotel in Amman, I have seen it all: Flights of doves emerging from balloons, billowing clouds of smoke, a bridge spanning the diminutive swimming pool, and revolving floodlights reminiscent of prisoner-of-war films.

Friends and relations relate tales of greater horror where an elephant was brought to regale the guests, of a car driven into the lobby of an hotel, and even of diamonds given to the guests instead of the traditional iced almonds, doubtless on the instigation of the dentists' association.

All this takes place to the accompaniment of a cacophony of music, guided by the principle that louder is better. The tranquillity of the evening is abruptly shattered by a trumpet blast that sends you searching for your eardrums on the floor. This announcement of the bride is followed by the professional and timeless Zaffah, which competes with Verdi's March of Radames, Vangelis' 1492 and Warda's Barwanas Beek to make conversation impossible.

Such devoted labour should not go unnoticed, nor unrewarded. I have taken a resolution to spend the time until next summer setting up a national panel that would assess weddings on pre-set and relevant criteria like cost of menu, height of cake, quantity of flowers, special effects, quantity of gold adorning the bride, number of plastic surgeries which the bride has undergone, and loudness and incompatibility of music. Every autumn, the winner will proudly receive the title: "Nouveau riche of the year".

Israel deal starts clock for Syria pact

By Patrick Worsnip
Reuters

WASHINGTON — This week's Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement starts the countdown for the United States to try to clinch a deal between the Jewish state and Syria, the last main holdout to a comprehensive Middle East peace.

Can the two sworn foes reach a settlement on an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights before the onset of Israeli and U.S. elections in 1996 means all bets are off?

The accord struck on Sunday by Israel and the PLO to expand Palestinian self-rule across most of the West Bank has left Syria sulking in the wings.

The official Syrian newspaper Tishreen said the deal had sold out Palestinian rights and would mean that "the situation in the

Arab occupied lands is open to more explosions."

But despite the rhetoric from Damascus, U.S. officials are hoping Sunday's pact will clear the way for them to re-focus their efforts on the Israeli-Syrian peace "track" after three months in which there has been no visible progress.

"I certainly haven't given up on that," Secretary of State Warren Christopher told Reuters in an interview. "I hope we can reinvigorate that track to make progress between now and the end of the year, and even into next year."

Mr. Christopher pledged that he would resume his personal shuttle diplomacy between Israel and Syria to try to make up for the lost time.

The outlines of an agreement have been clear ever since the slow-moving negotiations began almost four years ago.

Essentially, Israel withdraws from the strategic Golan plateau, which is seized in 1967, and Syria agrees to peace and diplomatic relations with Israel.

But the details involve painful concessions by both sides, and the key question for Israel and Syria remains: Is it worth making those sacrifices for the sake of an agreement?

The Syrian maintain — and many other Arabs believe them — that they are not going to make peace on anything except their own terms. Israeli elections or no elections.

But Washington believes that, whatever the Syrians may say, the agreement with the Palestinians, following earlier accords with Jordan and Egypt, faces Syria with the risk of political and economic isolation unless it follows suit.

East and North African Economic Summit in Amman on Oct. 29-31, which Syria and its ally Lebanon are boycotting, is intended to hammer home the message that economic benefits await those who make peace.

"I've always thought that progress on one track tends to incentivise the parties on another track," Mr. Christopher commented on the Israel-PLO accord, to be signed on Thursday on the White House lawn. "I think that's all be the effect here."

Another U.S. official put it less diplomatically: "I think (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Rabin has concluded he can do without a deal with Syria," he said.

"I think (Syrian President Hafez Al-) Assad knows that if there isn't an agreement now, there isn't any agreement. There's not going to be any Arab front

against Israel, nothing."

Still, some Middle East analysts believe the U.S. thinking misreads Mr. Assad's psychology, and that, having done without the Golan Heights for 28 years, he is not about to bow to Israeli terms for a peace agreement he is far from enthusiastic about.

One U.S. official said it should be clear within about the next six weeks which way Mr. Assad has decided to go.

Some officials are also beginning to say that the best that can be hoped for may be a framework agreement that would still require some details filled in after Israel's June elections.

Those elections could bring to power a Likud government much less willing to give up the Golan.

Israel and Syria are at odds over the timing and scope of an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan.

By Ranjit Singh

Palestinian elections: a necessity or a luxury?

JUDGING BY recent statements made by both Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, it appears that there has been some progress on an agreement for elections for a Palestinian council and president in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Preparations for elections, originally expected last July but now unlikely to be held before the end of the year, have been underway since shortly after the signing of the Declaration of Principles in September 1993. The Arafat-appointed Palestinian Commission for Elections and Local Government, the European Union and various international NGOs specialising in democratic development have been busy addressing the technical, logistical, legal and educational issues. Although a meaningful election timetable depends on the resolution of important issues still on the negotiating table (Israeli army redeployment, participation of Palestinians living in Jerusalem and of the opposition, etc.), an assessment of the attitudes of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza towards the long-awaited elections is timely. Summarised below are some of the concerns expressed in hundreds of town hall-style meetings, civic education training sessions, focus group studies, and so forth, as well as in many discussions with decision-makers within the Palestine National

al Authority (PNA) and other prominent national figures.

What are these elections for?

Expectations for elections are high, particularly among the residents of the Gaza Strip. The overwhelming majority of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza support elections for a National Council which would hold legislative powers. They are viewed by virtually all as an integral part of the state-building process. This majority includes both PNA officials and those not a part of the authority, including members of the secular and Islamic opposition. The demand for a legislative body comprises perhaps the sole point of consensus among Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Two central issues cloud the preparations for elections, however: the legal basis, and the type of electoral system to be used. The primary hindrance for those seeking to "sell" these elections to the wider Palestinian public is the very foundation for the elections — the Gaza-Jericho agreement. From the Palestinian political elite downwards, those who oppose the ambiguities of the agreement, including some members of

the "pro-peace" camp and the PNA, point out that a flawed agreement can only result in flawed elections. Despite fervent claims of Palestinian negotiators that they are unwilling to compromise beyond a certain point, many would prefer to see the PNA risk taking a firmer stand at the negotiating table to ensure no Israeli "interference", which they view as probable either through Israeli control of who participates (will opposition parties be allowed?), impediments by the Israeli Civil Administration, i.e. checkpoints, the location of voting stations (in or outside Jerusalem?), and so forth. As one Hebronite member of a pro-Oslo agreement faction stated during a public meeting, "I agree with PNA President Yasser Arafat that elections must be held as soon as possible, but not at any cost. He seems too willing to compromise the future."

The electoral system

Among the political elite, the nature of the electoral system is hotly debated. Generally, supporters of smaller opposition parties call for full proportional representation, which would in theory provide greater opportunity for the numerous factions or parties to achieve some representation in the elected

council. They view the proportional system as the best means for fair representation of all Palestinian factions within the elected National Council.

Proportional representation was recommended to PNA officials by the Palestinian Independent Elections Group, an unofficial body comprised of prominent academics, journalists and notables, in 1994, before the setting up of the official Arafat-appointed elections commission. The commission, however, has maintained that a majority system is best suited to the existing Palestinian political culture. The commission holds that the majority system would, while reducing political fragmentation and promoting national unity, best counter the negative effects of tribalism and large family dominance. Further, some commission members have pointed out that political parties in the occupied territories are not sufficiently developed for a proportional representation system.

Disagreements emerge

Thirteen months after the PNA gained limited administrative control of the Gaza Strip and Jericho, differences have opened up between West Bankers still under occupation and those in Gaza who now live with

the authority. In particular, Palestinians in the West Bank seem less at ease than Gazans when discussing the planned elections, which one Ramallah resident described as merely "a pretty theory" as long as little if any tangible improvement exists following "peace" with Israel. West Bankers point to continuing occupation, violence, land confiscations, expansion of settlements and rising unemployment as more appropriate priorities for the PNA.

Some also angrily blame the international media for arousing unrealistic expectations. "The international media has distorted reality, convincing the world that peace between Arabs and Israelis has followed the Oslo agreement," claimed a participant in a student meeting in Nablus. "There is no peace, so there cannot be fair elections."

Moreover, many heads of West Bank-based NGOs are apprehensive about the PNA's intentions towards their organisations. They point to the dismissal earlier this year of Raji Sourani, director of the Gaza Centre for Rights and Law, for criticising Mr. Arafat's establishment of military courts, citing this as one example of the PNA's

essentially undemocratic character. Last year's shut down by the PNA of An-Nahar newspaper is also not forgotten. For this reason, some Palestinian NGOs are reluctant to become visibly involved in the election process despite their desire to do so. Others seek protection through partnership with international organisations. As a prominent member of a Palestinian NGO network explained: "The NGOs were the basis of Palestinian civil society throughout the occupation, when there was no authority. They have the legitimacy of the people. But many of us are now afraid to work independently because the authority has the power to close us down or nationalise all the NGOs." These fears, justified or not, are impeding the participation of at least some NGOs and individuals as grass-roots organisers, civic educators and election monitors. It has become apparent that many in the West Bank will continue to view elections as being of secondary importance, almost a luxury.

Fears of abuses

Generally speaking, Gazans are more able to imagine elections as a necessary step. Long-awaited repairs to the Strip's infrastructure, the almost overnight appear-

ance of restaurants and leisure facilities along the Mediterranean shore, a new public park in Gaza city and reduced Israeli physical presence seem to have given substance to the peace process for many Gazans, despite massive unemployment.

Gazans remain, however, no more optimistic than their West Bank counterparts regarding the potential for fraud and abuses of power during the election process. When asked which aspects of a Palestinian electoral process would most need to be monitored independent of the PNA (i.e. the media, registration of voters, women's rights, party conduct, the elections commission, etc.), the almost unanimous response has been "all of them". Said one Beach Camp refugee and student at Al Azhar University (commonly referred to as "Fatah University", with the neighbouring Islamic university labelled "Hamas University"): "The parties will take care of their own interests. But the authority is sharing no information with the public, and we can't trust them to be fair." Another Gazan, a woman actively involved in party politics, complained angrily: "Even the parties are not kept informed. I have asked my party for information about

the draft election law, because I may want to represent my party as a candidate, but they won't tell me anything." The lack of basic information regarding the fundamentals of the proposed election process may adversely affect the process from the outset.

At a July meeting on elections held in Gaza City by various NGOs, a member of the official election commission was, much to his surprise, handed by a participant an unofficial draft of the Palestinian electoral law currently under negotiation. This false, inaccurate draft appears to have been in circulation for several months, and is believed by some to be a summary of the original. The lack of information from above, despite some encouraging attempts, is creating an environment conducive to false and misleading information stemming from other sources. Although not the intention of the PNA, such misinformation is leading to growing suspicions, valid or not, among the potential electorate just at the time when the reverse needs to be happening. Given the high degree of politicians within Palestinian society and its very limited experience with democracy, it is necessary that the PNA should keep the public informed for the sake of building confidence in a new electoral system.

Middle East International

Libya said to order mass expulsions

(Continued from page 1)

who requested anonymity said.

Col. Qadhafi began ejecting the 30,000 Palestinians in Libya in early September in a bid to swamp the West Bank and Gaza Strip to show that the Israeli-PLO autonomy accord had failed to create a Palestinian homeland. But the campaign slowed after intense Arab pressure.

His new order on Sunday came the day that Mr. Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres reached a deal for the second phase of autonomy to extend self-rule over the West Bank.

The Libyan official said 20 army tents had been set up at Mousa to "house the ejected Palestinians so their travel papers can be sent to the Egyptians for permission to enter."

Cairo has refused entry to Palestinians at Salloum if they cannot prove they have permits to travel directly through Egypt to either Gaza or Jordan.

Some 5,000 Palestinians, "perhaps far more," have crossed through Salloum since the start of the month, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said in Cairo.

Most had gone on to Gaza and Jordan, but 21 remained trapped for over three weeks in "appalling conditions" in no man's land near Salloum, Panos Mountziz, the UNHCR head of foreign relations, said.

"It's like a rubbish dump" with no shelter or supplies,

said Mr. Mountziz, adding that he had seen the Libyan tent camp during a visit to Salloum on Monday.

He warned the problem of the expulsions is "just being dumped from one border to another."

The Jewish state is refusing entry to those who cannot prove they have permanent residence in the Gaza Strip, while Lebanon has slapped visa restrictions on Palestinians kicked out of Libya.

Jordan also set up a camp at its southern port of Aqaba as a "sorting" station for Palestinians returning or transiting the country en route to the West Bank, Mr. Mountziz said.

The camp, named Al Rabia, would house 158 stranded Palestinians who left Salloum on Saturday. A first group of 89 Palestinians had already arrived at the camp and "a second batch is expected very soon," he said.

Another group of 40 left Sunday for the Egyptian border post of Rafah to cross into the Gaza Strip, where they had residence, but Mr. Mountziz could not confirm if they had arrived.

Two hundred more Palestinians crossed from Libya through Salloum on Monday en route to Gaza, he said. Libya has quietly squeezed out its Palestinians over the past four months, but the campaign intensified in early September with Col. Qadhafi urging Arab nations to follow suit.

Sudan had moved to help those kicked out of the coun-

try by setting up a committee and has drawn up plans for transportation.

Those expelled would be returned home in trucks and buses hired from Libyans and taken to three centres in Mileit, Hamrat Al Sheikh in the west and Dongola in northern Sudan.

Senior Sudanese official Tajeed Al Mahdi had left for Libya 10 days ago to try to regulate the situation and was working to arrange the transport home of Sudanese without residence permits, or working contracts, who had entered Libya without permission.

Earlier, there had been reports that Libya — under pressure from Egypt and the Arab League — had agreed to halt the expulsions and even let some of the Palestinians return.

But amid further deportations, Palestinian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Kadoumi met Libyan Arab Affairs Minister Gumaia Al Fazani last Thursday to try to resolve the dispute, but failed, said Mohammad Sobeh, the Palestinian envoy to the Arab League.

Meanwhile, there are signs the Libyans are seeking to hire Iraqis to replace other Arab nationals.

Last week Libya dispatched a recruiting delegation to Baghdad, Iraqi sources said on condition of anonymity. There are now some 65,000 Iraqis in Libya, mainly teachers and doctors as well as industrial and agricultural experts.

King reaffirms stands

(Continued from page 1)

When the Palestinian people reach a position where they can decide by their own volition on this choice.

The King reiterated Jordan's position vis-a-vis Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Jordan never supported the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, the King said, noting that he himself tried his best to contain the problem within the Arab context and to reverse the Iraqi action in Kuwait.

"I have never been for the occupation of Kuwait and I spoke time and again of the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by war," the King said.

On the Palestinian-Israeli autonomy agreement, King Hussein said that Jordan welcomes it as a positive achievement. He reaffirmed Jordan's support for the Palestinians and continued cooperation with them. The King voiced hope that elections will be held in the near future in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

On the future of Jordanian-Palestinian relations, King Hussein said that Jordan maintains unique relations with the Palestinians, but that talking about a possible federation should be left to the free decision of the two

peoples.

"Our Palestinian brethren are the closest to us and we are closer to them than all Arabs in history and geography and equal suffering," the King said. They have learned to have their say regarding their future, and sought to recover their rights on their land," the King said.

Earlier on Monday, the King addressed the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe and also met with senior officials from the European Parliament, including President Miguel Martinez and senior representatives from the EU member states.

Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor and the delegation accompanying them arrived in Washington

Tuesday. They were received upon arrival by Assistant Secretary of State for Middle East Affairs Robert Pelletreau, the chief of the White House protocol department, the head of the State Department's desk for Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Palestinian affairs and Jordan's ambassador in Washington Fayez Tarawneh and senior embassy staff. Jordan's permanent representative to the United Nations Hassan Abu Nimeh and senior White House and State Department officials.

In Washington, the King and Queen will attend a ceremony at the White House on Thursday where Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will formally sign the autonomy accord that the two sides worked out and finalised in Taba, Egypt, on Sunday.

Balkan ministers meet at U.N.

(Continued from page 1)

"I hope there is a possibility to move beyond Geneva to search for an agreement on constitutional issues on the presidency and the parliament," he said.

Tuesday's round of talks was to build on an agreement reached on September 8 in Geneva that calls for the creation of two entities in Bosnia-Herzegovina: A Muslim-Croat federation

headquartered in Sarajevo that would retain control over 51 per cent of the territory and a Bosnian Serb "republic" covering the remaining 49 per cent.

Russia's foreign minister told the general assembly Tuesday U.N. peacekeeping must be radically improved to give force to justice and prevent another Bosnia.

'Accord not final yet'

(Continued from page 1)

to pay for the observer teams.

Dr. Erekat said two other issues left unresolved in the new Israel-PLO agreement were the list of Palestinian prisoners scheduled to be released Thursday, and the PNA's demand that Israeli troops pull back further from Jericho.

The PLO's chief negotiator, and economy minister, Ahmad Qunira, said Monday that Israel will release about 1,500 Palestinian prisoners, including women, for Thursday's signing in Washington of the agree-

ment.

Dr. Erekat did not suggest that the signing would be delayed by the outstanding problems.

A second wave of about 1,500 of the estimated 6,000 prisoners would be freed after the elections to the autonomy council.

"The remainder will be freed during negotiations on the final status," of the Palestinian territories, which are set to start next May, he said.

Israel and the PLO have created a joint ministerial committee to discuss the numbers and exact dates for prisoner releases.

Palestinian reaction to the

accord ranged from eager anticipation in the northern West Bank town of Jenin where the Israeli withdrawal will begin to cries of sell-out in the southern town of Hebron.

Israel's normally voluble political voices were silent because of the national holiday to mark the Jewish new year.

On Sunday when the accord was announced right-wing Israelis attacked it as a danger to Israeli security.

Hamas rejected it as an attempt to "consecrate the Israeli occupation" of Palestinian land.

Other headline Palestinian groups called it a capitulation that entrenched the presence of more than 140,000 Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza.

last well was extinguished in late 1991. Large areas of coast and desert were covered with oil for months.

France meanwhile urged Iraq to accept a U.N. resolution allowing it to export crude oil to purchase humanitarian goods, such as food and medicine.

French Foreign Minister Herve de Charene told reporters late Monday that he made the recommendation to his Iraqi colleague Mohammad Al Sahaf during a meeting earlier in the day on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly.

Iraq, Kuwait resume talks

(Continued from page 12)

yet," compensation expert Adel Assem told Reuters.

Mr. Assem, general manager of the public authority for assessment of compensation for damages resulting from Iraqi occupation, was confirming an official Kuwait News Agency report quoting him as disclosing the figure.

He added that the figure was additional to the \$94.8 billion in claims the authority has already filed to the U.N. Compensation Committee, a

Geneva-based body managing the payment of occupation damage compensation.

Diplomats say the environmental claim covers the cost of repairing damage to desert, maritime and coastal areas, ground water resources and losses associated with environmental health.

In the last days of the occupation Iraqi troops torched or damaged 700 oil wells, three refineries and a tanker loading terminal. The

Arafat seen winning support

(Continued from page 1)

it was sidelined by Mr. Arafat after he signed a framework peace agreement with Israel in 1993.

At least seven of its members, including representatives of hardline movements, have boycotted its meetings in Tunis, still officially the PLO's headquarters.

Mr. Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will sign the self-rule agreement at a White House ceremony in Washington.

Mr. Arafat had said his deal with Israel would "no doubt" pave the way for a Palestinian state.

"It's our right to look forward. It is a dream of our people," Mr. Arafat said on Monday.

"No doubt it will not be easy but we have to work for it," he said, adding that he hoped "the implementation will be accurate" of the agreement which comes 16 months after the launch of autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho in May 1994.

Mr. Arafat was to visit Paris and London for official talks on Wednesday before flying to Washington where the agreement will be signed at a ceremony hosted by U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The PLO chairman will hold talks with French President Jacques Chirac at the Elysee Palace and will also see his wife and baby daughter, who was born in a Paris hospital in July.

After his France stopover he will meet British Prime Minister John Major in London, before heading for the United States late Wednesday.

In New York, Secretary of State Warren Christopher told the opening session of the U.N. General Assembly on Monday that the Israeli-PLO accord was a "historic milestone" and urged the world body to help further the peace process.

"That agreement will bring to life a goal first set in the Camp David accords — that is, to protect Israel's security and to give Palestinians throughout the West Bank control over their daily lives," he said.

Syria said meanwhile the PLO-Israeli accord would not force Syria to soften its stand and sign a similar agreement with the Jewish state.

"No doubt Rabin and his government found the caricatured negotiations on the Palestinian track easy," the official daily Al Baath said.

"But Rabin commits a deadly mistake if he thinks he can apply the same model of self-rule talks on the Syrian track."

It said the PLO-Israeli accord will not push Syria to make peace with Israel.

"The surrender of one or more Arab parties does not concern anybody but the parties themselves, and despite its dangerousness it will not affect the solidity and firmness of the Syrian stand," Al Baath said.

Israel's peace deals with Arab parties carried the seeds of further "disorder and aggression" in the Mid-

dle East, the newspaper said. Syria's peace talks with Israel, launched in 1991, are stalled over withdrawal from the Golan Heights occupied by Israel in 1967.

Syria demands full Israeli withdrawal from the Heights. Israel wants Syria to agree to full normal ties with the Jewish state before revealing the scope of withdrawal.

Al Baath accused Israel of blocking the peace talks on the Syrian-Israeli track.

"Peace according to Syria carries clear meanings which could not be subject to bargaining or abandoning any of the legitimate rights," it added.

The European Union (EU) welcomed the accord.

"The European Union expressed its profound satisfaction with the signing of the accord... (which) will allow a move towards the second phase of Palestinian autonomy, as set down in the declaration of principles," said a statement issued in Madrid on behalf of the EU, whose presidency is currently held by Spain.

"The EU applauds the far-sighted and bold stances of both sides, which manifest their sincere desire to achieve a real and lasting peace in the Middle East."

It went on to say the EU "urges Israelis and Palestinians to keep working with the same determination to accomplish the final objectives of the peace process."

U.S. President Bill Clinton views the signing of the Israel-PLO accord as an opportunity to advance Middle East peace, his spokesman said Monday.

"The Palestinians and Israel have taken a very important step forward," White House spokesman Michael McCurry said.

The president sees the signing ceremony Thursday as an "opportunity to work on the Middle East peace process," he said, but cautioned that no breakthrough was expected.

Mr. McCurry said a "businesslike" tone would likely dominate the ceremony.

No final schedule on the day's events was available yet, he said.

Sunday the president telephoned Mr. Rabin, Mr. Arafat, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, King Hussein and King Hassan of Morocco to express his pleasure with the Israel-PLO accord and to invite them to the signing ceremony.

The White House did not specify who had accepted the president's personal invitation. Mr. McCurry said that King Hassan did not plan to attend because of a schedule problem.

The administration does not expect representatives of Lebanon and Syria higher than ambassador-level, he added.

Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez will represent the EU at Mr. Clinton's invitation, his spokesman said in Madrid Monday.

Europe unlikely to turn to M.E. for gas

ABU DHABI (R) — Middle East gas producers will struggle to secure export markets in Europe despite projections of growing European gas consumption and uncertainty over future Russian supplies, experts have said.

Multi-billion-dollar liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects are being developed in Qatar, Oman and Yemen but only Qatar has so far managed to secure firm sales agreements and these are predominantly with Japanese energy companies.

Hopes that Gulf projects could be underpinned by sales to European power utilities and industrial consumers operating in an increasingly deregulated gas market are now being questioned.

"Europe will be a very difficult and challenging

opportunity to capture," Geoffrey Roberts, president of electricity utility Enron Europe Ltd told delegates at a conference on Middle East gas in the United Arab Emirates capital Abu Dhabi.

Conference speakers said Europe will import its future gas needs from Russia, Algeria, Nigeria and the North Sea because of their price competitiveness over long-haul LNG supplies from new plants being built in the Gulf.

Though Europe is vulnerable to possible gas supply disruptions from Russia in future, investments in gas pipeline export capacity in the Norwegian and British North Sea would satisfy northern European demand while growing Algerian supplies would capture new markets in the Mediterranean,

speakers said.

"Middle East LNG makes little sense (for Europe) in the long-term," James Ball, senior partner at consultants Gas Strategies said, adding that current gas sales from Abu Dhabi to Belgium and Spain would remain limited.

The delivered cost of LNG to Europe from one of Qatar's three advanced LNG projects would be \$4 per Million British Thermal Units (MBTU) compared to \$2.89 MBTU for incremental supplies from Algeria, Mr. Ball said.

Though Middle East gas producers could compete for sales to Greece and Turkey, they needed \$5 per MBTU to make a 15 per cent return on a northwest European round trip of over 12,000 miles (20,000 kilometres), Michael

Corke of analysts Purvin and Gertz said.

Gulf LNG export prices to Europe were higher than its competitors because of the cost of long-haul shipping and the investment needed to build new gasification trains rather than expand existing facilities as in Algeria.

Western European companies are reported to be reluctant to pay more than \$2.50 per MBTU to diversify their supplies.

Gulf LNG projects would have to mainly rely on long-term sales contracts to Far East and Asian customers where higher prices could be guaranteed, delegates said.

"It seems inevitable that the large and growing demand for gas in Asia will be met from the Middle East," Arthur Dixon, general manager of marketing at Shell

International Gas said.

Delegates from Gulf state oil and gas companies also agreed that their marketing focus had to remain with the main consumer markets in the Far East when exports start in the new decade.

"If Europe can rely on Russia... the biggest market will be in the East," an Omani delegate told Reuters.

Plans for giant cross-border gas pipelines stretching from the Middle East to Europe remain on the drawing board but they will have difficulty in securing finance, delegates said.

Demand for gas in Western Europe will hit 338 million tonnes of oil equivalent at the turn of the century and 433 million in 2010 from 261 million in 1993, Purvin and Gertz figures show.

Saudi economy seen as stable in short-term

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Saudi economy looks likely to stabilise in the short term as the Gulf oil heavyweight pushes ahead with reforms to offset weak crude prices and expand non-oil sectors, experts have said.

The kingdom, which controls more than a quarter of the world's crude reserves, has slashed an alarming budget deficit and announced a five-year spending plan that could absorb any fluctuation in oil prices.

This will help attract foreign capital and encourage the private sector to maintain its push into the state-controlled economy, the experts said.

"The Saudi economy is expected to stabilise in the short

term following external economic and security shocks that have slowed down growth rates," the Arab Corporation for Investment Guarantee (ACIG) said in a study.

"Such stability means the government is determined to adopt rational policies to manage the economy. In the face of internal and external challenges, stabilisation of the Saudi economy is itself an accomplishment," the study added.

The study, published in ACIG's 360-page Arab report for 1994, said Saudi Arabia had managed to cut the budget deficit to 3.3 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 1995 from as high

as 8.8 per cent in 1994. This was done through a spending cut to 150 billion Saudi riyals (\$40 billion) from 160 billion riyals (\$42.6 billion) and a projected increase in earnings to \$36 billion from \$32 billion.

The forecast rise in revenues was based on an increase in income from oil exports and service fees after the government hiked some service charges.

ACIG, a Kuwaiti-based Arab League institution, said several sectors in Saudi Arabia were projected to record positive growth rates in the short term.

They include export-oriented industries, petrochemicals, food products, banking, education, communication, water and electricity, and defence.

But other sectors were expected to register negative growth, including the public sector, oil, contracting, agriculture, cement and other building materials, real estate and public works, ACIG said.

It gave no figures but Saudi economy has sharply slowed down over the past decade due to a drop in crude prices. In 1994, the private sector grew by around five per cent while the government sector shrank.

"There is no doubt the new five-year development plan will contribute to stabilisation of the Saudi economy," a Saudi economic expert said. "The plan envisages lower expenditure but this will be offset by projections of higher investment and a greater role by the private sector."

The 1995-1999 plan, announced by Riyadh two months ago, forecast spending at an average \$40 billion a year, much lower than the 1993 expenditure of around \$52 billion.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is a good day for having guests in and treating them royally and deepening relationships. Make surroundings more attractive.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Make routine dealings with others more as you want them to be today and gain greater success. Walk and drive with care.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Get your business dealings with others on a more ideal basis and tonight can be brighter. Make needed repairs on property.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You are magnetic today and gain favours from others easily if you show more affection for them.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You feel satisfied and happy today and should do something thoughtful for the less fortunate. Surprise your mate with a present.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Being with good pals and showing affection can bring fine benefits today. Show others how much you really like them.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You have an opportunity to gain the favour of a bigwig today who can help you to get ahead faster. Cooperate with outside partners.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is a good day to make a fine impression on new contacts who have excellent ideas to exchange with you. Show affection for your loved one.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are alert to goings-on around you today and particularly where the practical is concerned for your success.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You can handle civic affairs today which can be of benefit to you, so get busy at them. Read contracts carefully.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Try to be more efficient at whatever your duties happen to be and add beauty to them as well. Organise financial affairs.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You have an opportunity to arrange for more pleasure in the days ahead, so get your ideas worked out carefully.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

Europe's single currency hopes thrown in doubt

BRUSSELS (R) — European monetary union suffered a further setback Monday as a chorus of central bank governors and diplomats called for caution in pursuit of a 1999 deadline.

The European Commission, increasingly the lone guardian of the Maastricht treaty, tried desperately to

quell the rising tide of doubt and argued for no deviation from the path agreed by member states in 1991 of economic and monetary union (EMU).

"We must not deviate from the road set out for EMU," commission President Jacques Santer said.

But its position has become more precarious as a growing number of top-level officials question the logic of a monetary union with either too few members or one enlarged on the basis of a generous reading of the treaty's requirements.

In Germany, Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer said the timetable for a single

currency should take a back seat to a proper foundation.

Germany has been at the forefront arguing for strict adherence to the treaty's economic criteria on concerns that too liberal an interpretation would weaken the entire project.

"Despite the basic Maastricht treaty, much is still

unclear at present," the German central bank chief said in a speech to a Frankfurt conference.

His views were echoed by officials in Bonn who suggested there might be a slight delay to the official 1999 start date.

The furor over monetary union was unleashed last

week when German Finance Minister Theo Waigel told a closed-door session of the German parliament that Italy would not be among the first wave forming a single currency.

His remarks shook the Italian government, prompting Prime Minister Lamberto Dini to ask for a delay of one or two years for countries like Italy to meet the treaty's criteria.

But while the Germans at first appeared alone in their concern, it has become apparent that others share in their desire for a more cautious approach.

Italian central bank governor Antonio Fazio told a subcommittee of the European Parliament that the rules governing economic and monetary union should not be "weakened or made flexible."

He also welcomed any efforts that would strengthen budget discipline after the introduction of a single currency.

Dutch central bank president Wim Duisenberg said that many member states would not meet the criteria, but stressed that they should be strictly applied.

"In all probability most member states will have great difficulty rounding off their macroeconomic preparations for the start of phase three," Mr. Duisenberg told a financial forum in Belgium.

Hinting at the possibility of delay, Mr. Duisenberg added: "Introduction of a single currency should not be forced, because it will reduce the public's acceptance of the currency."

Financial market participants appeared to view the latest move over monetary union as a recipe for disaster, with some suggesting it might fall apart entirely.

"You might say that by speaking the unspeakable the whole process is in danger of running into the sand," said Robin Marshall, chief economist of Chase Manhattan Bank in London.

Gas projects to boost Qatari economy

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Qatar's economy is set to overcome the effects of weak oil prices and pick up in the next few years when the Gulf OPEC producer completes one of the biggest gas liquefaction projects in the world, an official report said Wednesday.

By 2000 Qatar will be able to export 16 million tonnes of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Japan and other Asian consumers and production will jump to 24 million tonnes five years later, said the report by the Kuwait-based Arab Corporation for Investment Guarantee (ACIG).

"Gas will play a significant role in the Qatari economy in the medium and long terms after the completion of LNG projects," it said. "For the time being, however, the economy will remain under the effect of fluctuating oil prices and other external factors."

Qatar has embarked on multi-billion-dollar projects to tap its giant North Field, the biggest reservoir of natural gas in the world, with estimated reserves of around 7.09 trillion cubic metres (236.3 trillion cubic feet).

The government, which owns the majority of shares in the projects, has signed supply contracts with Japan, India, Turkey, Taiwan and South Korea and is looking for more clients to get the three ventures off the ground.

Long-term supply contracts are essential for any LNG project to be carried out as gas is not sold on the spot market like crude oil. Qatari officials have said they will press ahead with the three projects although LNG ventures cost much more than oil projects. They believe the LNG projects will pay off as gas demand is growing faster than oil.

ACIG's 360-page report for 1994, said LNG consumption stood at around 44 million tonnes per year in Japan and other East Asian nations and would grow by nearly 50 per cent by 2000.

"This means Qatar will become a major exporter of such a clean source of energy to the Far East markets," the report said. ACIG, a key Arab League institution, did not provide

figures on Qatar's future income from LNG sales. But experts said they expected such sales to fetch as much as oil, depending on price terms in the supply contracts.

Qatar is a relatively small oil producer, with an output capacity of around 430,000 barrels per day (b/d). With its crude reserves standing at nearly four billion barrels, they could last around 25 years at present output levels.

Its annual oil exports earnings have ranged between \$2.8 billion and \$3.2 billion over the past five years. But they could rise if prices maintain their level in the near future and Qatar pushes ahead with projects to raise oil output capacity to around 500,000 b/d.

"In the short-term LNG projects in Qatar will benefit economic activity as they will attract foreign labour, which will contribute to increasing demand for houses and consumer goods. Western partnership in gas projects will also sharply boost foreign investment in the country," the report said.

Rupee's fall to help India meet export target

BOMBAY (AFP) — The Indian rupee's sharp fall against the U.S. dollar will help the country meet its official export target of \$3.15 billion for 1995-96, foreign trade chief Shyamal Ghosh has said.

"The target will be achieved especially due to the recent developments on the exchange rate front," the director general of foreign trade told exporters at the Synthetic and Rayon Textiles Export Promotion Council. He said exports were up 29 per cent in the first four months of the fiscal year which began April 1 but called for vigorous efforts to better export performance.

The rupee has fallen to a low of 35 rupees to the dollar after trading at around 31

rupees to the dollar since March 1993, when the New Delhi relaxed currency restrictions on the current account.

Mr. Ghosh said India needed to significantly increase exports in order "to reclaim our share in global trade."

"In 1900, India had a 10 per cent share of the global trade. It fell to 2.5 per cent in 1947 and was 0.6 per cent in 1993. Our share will be only one per cent if we meet the official target of \$75 billion by 2000," he said.

Mr. Ghosh said New Delhi was fast moving to a user-friendly export trade regime as part of the reforms process begun in 1991.

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Cap



business daily beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Study: A family needs JD 580 minimum income per month

AMMAN — The Industrial Development Bank (IDB) marked its 30th anniversary Tuesday with a call on Jordanian entrepreneurs who lack finance to realise their business ideas to take advantage of an IDB risk capital programme that offers up to JD 850,000 for feasible projects.

IDB Chairman Munther Fahoum and Director-General Rajab Sa'd made the call at a press conference, where they also outlined the general activities of the IDB since its inception in 1965 and how the state agency contributed to the industrial development of the Kingdom.

They said the IDB had up to \$6.5 million available for the risk capital programme under which the bank takes a certain percentage of equity in commercially feasible industrial projects and retains the equity participation for a period of 20 years before asking the entrepreneur to buy out the IDB.

In return, the IDB will absorb losses, if any, as well as take a share of the profits. However, the programme has not drawn enough attention from Jordanian entrepreneurs, said Mr. Fahoum.

"It is not a problem of availability of funds," he said. "It is a problem of demand. People do not seem to be aware of the existence of the programme."

"We call upon our young men with innovative ideas and projects to contact the bank if they lack capital to implement them," said Mr. Fahoum.

The IDB has already extended about JD 1.5 million to 27 projects under the risk capital scheme and turned down only one application because the project was not found to be feasible, said Mr. Sa'd.

An individual project could seek up between JD 20,000 and JD 250,000 under the risk capital scheme, and if it has a partner from any of the European Union (EU) countries then it could seek up to JD 850,000, he added.

"We now have about five million ECUs (European Currency Units), about \$6.5 million available under the scheme," said Mr. Sa'd, noting that the funds had come from the European Investment Bank (EIB) under bilateral protocols signed by the government of Jordan and the European Union.

"We have not exhausted the source, and there are also other sources for funding the scheme," added Mr. Fahoum.

In its regular operations, the IDB, which finances projects in the industrial and tourism sectors — including hotels, restaurants and tourism transport operations — has lent about JD 255 million in the last 30 years.

IDB invites investors to benefit from risk capital programme

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

At the same time, said Mr. Sa'd, the IDB will be looking closely at the private sector projects expected to be submitted at the summit for possibilities of financing.

Mr. Fahoum said the IDB had a clear role to play in helping the industrial sector to develop in Jordan in the absence of other similar institutions. As such, he said, a reported World Bank recommendation that Jordan do away with specialised financial institutions — a category that broadly includes the IDB — should not have any bearing on the IDB.

"Our focus is on small- and medium-size industrial projects that we could handle ourselves with Jordan," said Mr. Fahoum. As such, involvement in the multi-million dollar projects, which also have a regional nature, is beyond the realm of the IDB.

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Japan's Daiwa Bank posts big bond loss in New York

OSAKA, Japan (R) — Daiwa Bank, one of Japan's top ten commercial banks, said Tuesday that a senior executive at its New York branch had run up huge losses of \$1.1 billion in bond trading.

Japan's financial authorities called the incident "deeply regrettable," but moved swiftly to allay fears that it would undermine the financial system, which is already burdened by beaps of bad debt from the bursting of the country's late 1980s asset price bubble.

Daiwa Bank President Akira Fujita told a news conference in Osaka, where the bank has its headquarters, that the losses were run up between 1984 and 1995 by Toshitake Iguchi, the bank's executive vice president in charge of bond trading and settlements, at Daiwa's New York office.

How the losses — run up in U.S. Treasury bonds and bills — were hidden from senior management was still under investigation, Mr. Fujita said.

Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura said there was no need for concern about the financial health of Daiwa, Japan's 10th largest commercial bank.

"It is deeply regrettable that such an incident has happened," he said in a statement, but added: "I have been informed that Daiwa Bank will write off all the loss incurred from this incident in its half-year earnings."

"I believe the bank can well afford to cope with this loss and that when considering their asset quality, profitability and unrealised gains on their assets, this incident will not cause any concern over Daiwa's financial strength," he explained.

Bank of Japan Governor Yasuo Matsuura said in a statement that the central bank had issued a strict warning to Daiwa. But he said it was confident Daiwa's losses would "in no way" undermine the overall management of the bank.

Daiwa kept its forecast for parent net profit in the six months to Sept. 30 at an earlier forecast seven billion yen (\$70.0 million). But it revised up its current profit forecast by a huge amount — 102 billion yen (\$1.02 billion) against an earlier outlook of 12 billion yen (\$120 million).

The bank also said it would keep its full-year parent net forecast for 1995/96 at 14 billion yen (\$140 million) while raising its current profit forecast to 113 billion yen (\$1.13 billion) from 25 billion yen (\$250 million).

It maintained its group net forecast for 1995/96 at seven billion yen (\$70 million) while boosting its current profit outlook to 115 billion yen (\$1.15 billion) from 27 billion yen (\$270 million).

Daiwa attributed the high forecasts for current profit — which includes gains and losses on investments in securities and other non-operating activities — to falling market interest rates and higher profits from bond trade in general.

But one industry analyst said the bank was likely to sell shareholdings to boost current profit and cover the \$1.10 billion special loss on the New York bond transactions.

"This will mean a decrease in Daiwa's ability to cope with its problem loans," said Katsuhiko Sasajima, banking analyst at Nikko Research Centre Ltd. "It's a tough situation for them."

Mr. Sasajima said, however, that the issue seemed due to a rogue trader and was in that sense separate from the problem of the huge bad debts weighing down Japan's financial system.

It revelation follows several high profile financial failures in Japan in the past few months resulting from the bad loan problem, including the collapse of Hyogo Bank, a major regional institution.

The finance ministry has estimated that those bad debts could total 50 trillion yen (\$500 billion), of which perhaps under 20 trillion yen (\$200 billion) are unrecoverable.

A finance ministry advisory panel is due to come out with an interim report Wednesday on how authorities should handle the bad debt problem.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHWEISANI				
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179				
ORGANIZED MARKET SEAS PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 26/09/1995				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK P.C.	1780	431530	239.750	244.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	900	4042	4.460	4.500
BANK OF JORDAN	250	863	3.420	3.450
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	12000	14620	1.220	1.220
THE HOUSING BANK	10550	59925	5.300	5.300
JORDAN GOLF BANK	204117	240601	1.170	1.160
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	1937	7253	3.730	3.750
BUSINESS BANK	1000	3640	3.650	3.640
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	200400	74698	3.750	3.800
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	20850	19660	970	940
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	700	1118	1.610	1.590
BANKS SECTOR	454484	1527948	THREE NUMBER: 194.23	CHANGE: +1.32
JERUSALEM INSURANCE	20000	82000	4.100	4.100
JORDAN FRANCH INSURANCE	7950	21466	2.650	2.700
ROYAL LAND INSURANCE	500	1200	2.530	2.400
INSURANCE SECTOR	28473	104759	THREE NUMBER: 132.85	CHANGE: +0.01
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	33614	56013	1.670	1.670
JABAL DISTRICT ELECTRICITY	200	242	1.200	1.210
VEHICLES OWNERS FEDERATION	72493	513896	7.050	7.050
JORDANIAN HOTELS	2481	14566	5.880	5.950
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	335	1458	2.730	2.730
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	25050	52930	2.080	2.100
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	1750	1950	1.140	1.110
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	500	600	1.200	1.200
JORDAN POST & PUBLIC RELATIONS	1000	7590	7.590	7.590
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMERCIAL HOTELS	30450	92949	2.390	2.420
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	27500	85800	3.120	3.120
SARJA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	11850	15929	1.340	1.350
UNION LAND DEVELOPMENT CORP.	124591	141584	1.120	1.130
SERVICES SECTOR	340424	985511	THREE NUMBER: 128.65	CHANGE: +0.12
JORDAN POST & PUBLIC RELATIONS	100	2072	19.720	19.720
ATTACHEE CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	3170	3806	1.200	1.200
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	2145	7784	3.630	3.630
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	8000	24015	3.000	3.000
THE ARAB POTASH	250	1233	4.930	4.930
JORDAN POTASH INDUSTRIES	2096	19720	9.410	9.430
JORDAN POTASH INDUSTRIES	3505	4907	1.400	1.400
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	794	2544	3.200	3.210
THE JORDAN WASTE MILLS	200	1520	7.600	7.600
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	1500	7425	4.950	4.950
JORDAN CEMENT INDUSTRIES	1054	1054	1.000	1.000
THE JORDAN PAPER MANUFACTURING	250	624	2.500	2.500
THE PUBLIC MINING	200	586	2.920	2.930
RAPIA INDUSTRIES	400	912	2.300	2.280
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL & INVESTMENT	1550	11470	7.450	7.400
LIVESTOCK & POLYMER	21478	14460	6.700	6.700
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	1500	2118	1.420	1.410
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	5460	5966	1.100	1.090
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	1800	2302	1.280	1.280
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	300	1270	4.300	4.300
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	1350	2000	1.480	1.480
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	250	530	2.130	2.120
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	800	2575	3.210	3.220
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	4450	8866	1.990	1.990
JORDAN NEW BIBLE COMPANY	7150	11650	1.650	1.650
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	10000	12495	1.250	1.250
UNION CHEMICAL & VEGETARIAN OIL INDUSTRY	194300	406906	2.010	2.050
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	275017	573805	THREE NUMBER: 125.02	CHANGE: -0.07
GRAND TOTAL	1092490	3192073	THREE NUMBER: 160.12	CHANGE: +0.77
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET		23823		
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET		233644		

Financial Jordan Times				
In co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank				
U.S. Dollar in International Markets				
Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close		
	Date: 25/9/95	Date: 26/9/95		
Sterling Pound	1.5710	1.5673		
Deutsche Mark	1.4341	1.4350		
Swiss Franc	1.1553	1.1599		
French Franc	4.9500	4.9653		
Japanese Yen	100.48	100.25		
European Currency Unit	1.2880	1.2899		

Precious Metals				
Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz
Gold	383.45	7.50	Silver	5.49
				0.120

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rates				
Date: 26/9/1995				
Currency	Buy	Offer		
Sterling Pound	1.1152	1.1208		
Deutsche Mark	0.4956	0.4981		
Swiss Franc	0.6153	0.6184		
French Franc	0.1435	0.1442		
Japanese Yen	0.7099	0.7134		
Dutch Guilder	0.4424	0.4446		
Swedish Krona	0.0441	0.0443		
Italian Lira	0.0441	0.0443		
Belgian Franc	0.0441	0.0443		

Other Currencies				
Date: 26/9/1995				
Currency	Buy	Offer		
Bahraini Dinar	1.8700	1.8820		
Lebanese Lira	0.043560	0.044450		
Saudi Riyal	0.1892	0.1906		
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3050	2.3450		
Qatari Riyal	0.1941	0.1953		
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2180		
Omani Riyal	1.8260	1.8490		
UAE Dirham	0.1930	0.1939		
Greek Drachma	0.2765	0.3250		
Cypriot Pound	1.5175	1.6000		

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One U.S. dollar	1.3466/76	Canadian dollar	1.4376/86
	1.6104/14	Deutsche mark	1.6104/14
	1.1618/28	Dutch guilders	29.57/62
	4.9638/88	Swiss francs	1606.30/30
	100.81/90	Belgian francs	100.81/90
	6.9660/60	French francs	6.9660/60
	6.3210/60	Italian lire	6.3210/60
	5.5825/75	Japanese yen	5.5825/75
One sterling	\$1.5686/96	Swedish crowns	\$1.5686/96
One ounce of gold	\$383.10/383.60	Norwegian crowns	\$383.10/383.60
		Danish crowns	\$383.10/383.60

FOR THE third time, the Tourism Investment Department at the Social Security Corporation is advertising its invitation for investors to take charge of the Al Azraq Tourism Resthouse against an annual fee. Only offers from specialised tourism or hotel institutions will be accepted until 12 noon on Monday, Oct. 2, 1995 (Al Ra'i).

Jordan Times Tel: 667171

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

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Turino
YES U CAN

Egypt, Ivory Coast reach Champion's Cup semi-finals

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Title favourites Ismailia of Egypt and ASEC of Ivory Coast reached the African Champion's Cup semi-finals at the weekend despite being held goalless at home.

They were joined to the penultimate stage of the premier club competition by South Africa's Orlando Pirates, who outclassed Gabonese visitors Mbilanga 3-0.

Ismailia, seeking to keep the cup in North African hands for the 12th consecutive year, face ASEC next month for a place in the decider while Pirates await the winners of a postponed match between Dynamos of Zimbabwe and Express of Uganda.

Defending champions Esperance, one goal behind following the first leg in Tunisia, surrendered the title after drawing to Ismailia while ASEC, with a two-goal cushion against Ghanaians Abusa Goldfields, disappointed a capacity of 50,000 crowd in Abidjan by failing to find the net.

The elimination of Esperance confirmed a jinx hanging over the title holders as no club has successfully defended the symbol of continental supremacy since 1968, when TP Englebert of Zaïre defeated Etoile Filante of Togo.

Pirates, anxious since losing to a last-minute goal in Libreville, were ahead at FNB stadium when Helman Mkhalele headed a John Moeti cross past goalkeeper Mendou Germain.

A deflected drive by Brendan Silen put the Buccaneers two goals ahead before half-time and Jerry Skosana completed the scoring with a

close range shot two minutes from the final whistle.

Cup Winners' Cup holders Daring Club Motema Pembe of Zaïre also bowed out, losing 2-0 in Julius Berger in Nigeria, where Taiwo Oloyede converted a first-half penalty and Ikponmwa Omorogie struck the decisive goal in the 65th minute.

Hearts of Oak from Ghana, one of the best clubs never to lift an African Cup, will have to wait at least one more year to fulfil the ambition despite a 2-1 success in Accra over experienced Algerians JS Kabylie.

A 40,000 crowd crammed into the national stadium sensed a glorious day for Ghana when Thomas Quay converted two penalty kicks within 8 minutes midway through the first half.

These goals put the West Africans ahead under the away-goal rule, but Malieudine Meffah reduced the arrears 10 minutes into the second half and Kabylie squeezed through on aggregate.

Malindi of Tanzania caused an upset in the CAF Cup, the competition for championship runners up by winning 2-0 in Togo against Azaga, who had looked set to advance following a goalless first leg.

The damage was done in a seven-minute, first-half spell when national player Edilby Lunyamila and Bakala Djouma scored for a visiting team bolstered by several Zambian stars.

Tunisians Etoile du Sahel also triumphed away, slamming three goals past Ferroviario in Mozambique without reply to complete the most decisive victory of the quarter-finals.

Irish man to join Schumacher at Ferrari

MARANELLO, Italy (R) — Ferrari named Eddie Irvine on Tuesday as their second driver for the 1996 Formula One season alongside defending world champion Michael Schumacher of Germany.

The brief announcement said Irvine, a 29-year-old Briton from Northern Ireland, would switch from Jordan under a deal that could hold good for up to three seasons, thanks to "good relations" between the two teams.

It gave no financial details. The Italian newspaper Corriere dello Sport speculated that Ferrari may have to pay up to \$5 million in goodwill money to Jordan, which only last Thursday confirmed Irvine and Brazilian Rubens Barrichello as its 1996 drivers.

Ferrari have been hunting for a teammate for Schumacher since an announcement four weeks ago that Austrian Gerhard Berger would follow Frenchman Jean Alesi to Benetton, the team the German world championship leader is leaving.

It had initially signalled that a decision would be made public after the Grand Prix of Europe in Germany on Oct. 14.

Tuesday's statement said: "Ferrari announces that Eddie Irvine will drive alongside Michael Schumacher in the next Formula One world championship."

"The agreement, which is extendable to the 1997 and 1998 sporting seasons, was reached today thanks to good relations between Ferrari and Jordan-Peugeot."

Irvine, who began motor racing at the age of 18, has spent his entire Formula One career at Jordan, which he joined in 1993.

He has contested 28 Formula One races, with a best finish of third in the Canadian Grand Prix on June 11. He lies 13th in the championship standing with six

Anand beats Kasparov, ends string of draws

NEW YORK (R) — Indian challenger Viswanathan Anand pumped new enthusiasm into the World Chess Championship on Monday with a dramatic victory over champion Garry Kasparov of Russia.

Kasparov, 32, resigned the ninth game after Anand's 35th move in the first decisive result of the best-of-20 Professional Chess Association match so far.

The players had set a record in the past two weeks by drawing the opening eight games.

"Now we're going to have a real match," declared Argentine Grandmaster Miguel Najdorf, one of several experts to praise the 25-year-old Anand for attacking Kasparov with his favourite Sicilian Defence.

The challenger leads the match by five points to four, but he was typically modest at the post-game news conference.

"It's the first time I've beaten him for a while, so it's nice," he said. "There's still 11 games left... it's about as well as I've played so far."

The victor will be the first to reach 10½ points and receive almost \$1 million from the sponsor Intel Corp.

Kasparov would keep the title in the event of a 10-10 tie and total prize money of about \$1.5 million would be shared. One point is awarded

for a win and a ½ point for a draw.

Anand was playing with the advantage of the white pieces and the first move, similar to holding the serve in tennis.

He tackled Kasparov with the same opening for the fifth time since their battle started Sept. 11 on the 107th floor enclosed observation deck of New York's World Trade Centre.

Out of the opening, grandmaster and three-times U.S. champion Yasser Seirawan, compared Kasparov's situation to that of a hedgehog.

"All of his pieces are burrowed in, they all have only one square, but they're coiled and hisling and by the time you get him out of the hole, you could be exhausted," he said.

But the Indian player, renowned for his over-the-board aggression, sacrificed one of his rooks for a less-valuable knight in the centre of the board on move 27, to set up a tense position which gave him winning chances.

Kasparov, who is defending his crown for the fifth time, could not find the counter-attacking resources necessary to ward off Anand's queen, bishop and three pawns that had infiltrated his position.

When Anand won a vital pawn on his 34th turn and then followed it up with a



Champion Garry Kasparov (right) of Russia, stares at challenger Viswanathan Anand of India during the 9th game of their best-of-20 games World Chess Championship, at the World Trade Centre in New York (Reuters photo)

defensive king move, the Russian realised he could not win or even hold on for

another draw and offered a handshake in resignation. The several hundred spec-

tators applauded loudly for Anand as he left the soundproof glass booth where the

games are being played. The 10th game will be played on Tuesday.

Record number of draws bores outsiders, increases chess tension

NEW YORK (AP) — It is the one chess record nobody wants to break.

The eight consecutive draws that started the title bout between world champion Garry Kasparov and challenger Viswanathan Anand has been boring for outsiders, frustrating for insiders, and a big worry for U.S. chess promoters.

"It's not computers that are killing chess, it's the draws," said one spectator after the seventh game ended in a tie after less than two hours play.

The sequence of draws may be less annoying overseas, where sports fans are used to frequent ties in soccer

and to five-day internationals in cricket that often peter out to a draw.

This contest, however, is taking place in the United States. This is, after all, the place where the phrase "a draw is like kissing your sister" was coined, and where two of the nation's top sports, baseball and basketball, are structured to preclude draws.

While chess beginners hardly ever draw their games, the number of ties tends to increase proportionately with the strength of the players and their increasingly sophisticated defensive techniques.

But there's at least one person who remains fairly content with the quiet start, Anand, universally perceived

as the pre-match underdog, has proven that he can hold the 32-year-old Russian titleholder with ease. That opens up the genuine possibility that Anand, 25, of India, could unseat the world champion.

Kasparov, in his 1993 title defence with British grandmaster Nigel Short, blew away his opponent with three victories in the first four games and the Englishman never recovered.

Many chess experts believe that if Anand could survive Kasparov's early onslaught, his chances will increase.

"If you have two people that are very good and very aware of the danger of making a mistake, you tend to get a lot of draws and that's

what's happening here," said former U.S. champion Patrick Wolff, who is working as one of Anand's trainers during the 20-game contest.

"However, as the match goes on and continues to be so close, eventually each player will take more risks to upset the balance."

Wolff, who lives in Somerville, Massachusetts, and is an avid fan of the U.S. Major League baseball club the Boston Red Sox, compared the sequence of draws to baseball.

"Everybody likes a baseball game with a lot of home runs, but real baseball fans know and understand that the best baseball games are very well pitched and are often decided by a few bits,"

he said. "And this chess match is the same way."

Kasparov told reporters Thursday that his work as a director of the New York-based Professional Chess Association, which organized the \$1.5 million contest, may be partially responsible for his slow start.

"I think I'm slowing coming to my normal shape," Kasparov said.

Recognising the early finish that night was a letdown for spectators, Kasparov took the unusual step of coming out of the soundproof booth where the game was played to address several hundred audience members.

"Everybody is dis-

appointed, of course," said Kasparov, who has held the title since 1985. "Any mistake can be a decisive one. The pressure will increase with each game, and I wouldn't bet on 20 draws."

Anand's biggest problem is that Kasparov retains his title in the event of a 10-10 tie. So if he loses a game, he must win two to take the lead. A win scores one point and a draw, a half-point.

Anand said he was amused by a segment on Thursday's "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno," where actors mimicking the players were covered in cobwebs.

"It's a perception I expected them to have," Anand said.

New Olympic cash share-out for 2004

LAUSANNE (AFP) — International sports federations will pick up a 10 per cent increase in Olympic television revenue, which should amount to at least \$70 million from 2004, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), said here Monday.

IOC Director General

Francois Carrard said receipts for the host city would be cut from 60 per cent to 49 per cent, with international federations getting about 10 per cent more.

The Executive Board meeting at Nagoya, Japan, in December will decide

exactly how the money will be shared out to give candidates for the 2004 Games time to reconsider before the Jan. 10 deadline for bids.

Sydney, which will host the 2000 Games, has negotiated \$715 million for U.S. broadcasting rights alone, compared to the

\$456 million Atlanta will get for next year's Games. Carrard said although the percentage for host cities would be cut from 2004, the steady rise in television income meant they would not suffer any real loss.

The international federations had been demanding

a bigger cut of television money for several years.

Cape Town, St. Petersburg, Stockholm, Seville, Rome, Lille or Lyon, Boston, Osaka, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, San Juan and perhaps Beijing are candidates for the 2004 Games.

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Iraq, Kuwait resume talks on missing

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Kuwaiti and Iraqi experts met near the border for the second time in a month on Tuesday to discuss the fate of people who went missing in Iraq's 1990-91 occupation, a U.N. official said.

The talks, chaired by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), took place on the Iraqi side of the frontier and will probably go into a second day, the spokesman for the U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) said.

The 32-nation observer force, which patrols a 15 kilometre wide demilitarised border strip set up after the 1991 Gulf war, is hosting the meeting at its headquarters in the Iraqi town of Um Qasr but has no further role in the event.

The two sides held two days of talks on the Kuwaiti side of the border on Aug. 29 and 30 in the longest session of formal meetings the two countries have ever held on the issue.

The meetings are the latest in a series by a technical working group of a Geneva-based commission investigating the Gulf war missing issue.

Kuwait wants Iraq to account for 600 Kuwaitis and Kuwait-based nationals from other countries who disappeared during the occupation and the six-week war that ended it.

Kuwait and its ally the United States say a full accounting is one of several conditions Iraq must meet before economic sanctions imposed after its 1990 invasion can be lifted.

Iraq has said it has freed all those it captured during the occupation but has promised to investigate the issue further.

The UNIKOM spokesman said he believed Kuwait-based diplomats from the United States, Britain, France and Saudi Arabia were also attending the talks. These nations say several dozen of their nationals are also missing.

A Kuwaiti official said in August that Baghdad had admitted for the first time that 116 prisoners were taken to Iraq during the occupation. Previously Baghdad said only 73 prisoners had been taken and that it had lost trace of them in the aftermath of the war.

However, Iraq denied the Kuwaiti official's claim. Iraq and Kuwait have met 13 times in Geneva to discuss the prisoners and missing.

Kuwait said meanwhile it estimated its claim for environmental damage caused by Iraq's occupation would amount to about 2.25 billion dollars (\$7.5 billion).

"The figure is only an estimate. We haven't done the detailed work on the claims (Continued on page 7)



A Palestinian passes by a group of Israeli soldiers in Hebron, where tension remains high following the initialing of the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy accord which left Israel in control over parts of the West Bank town (AFP photo)

Autonomy council will not replace PLO, Qouriea says

CAIRO (AFP) — A new self-rule council will not replace the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the "supreme" authority in the Palestinian territories, the Palestinian Economy Minister Ahmad Qouriea told the Arabic daily Al Hayat on Tuesday.

The council, to be elected in line with an autonomy deal reached Sunday by Israel and the PLO, is "a legislative council. I can call it a council of representatives," Mr. Qouriea said.

"But it is too early to consider a replacement to the Palestinian National Council (PNC) or the PLO. That is not permissible. It would be destructive," the Palestinians' top negotiator with Israel said.

The PLO, based in Tunis, represents inhabitants inside the territories and diaspora Palestinians, who make up four-fifths of the PNC, the Palestinians' parliament in exile.

"The PLO will conduct negotiations until the rights of the Palestinians are realised and the elected council will serve as one of its instruments," Mr. Qouriea said.

The PNC is the "supreme basic authority. The new council is a body for the Palestinian (National) Authority (PNA) on the ground. But it does not decide the future of the Palestinian people nor agreements with Israel."

The council "will be like one of (the PNC's) committees and it will serve for the transition period only," he said.

"We expect after final status talks a new entity and a new authority. There will not be refugees and displaced. Those who return will return and relations with those who remain outside will in some way be organised," Mr. Qouriea said.

"But this council will not be the council of the new entity."

Talks on the final status of the territories are due to start in May 1996. The interim period of Palestinian self-rule, which was launched in the Gaza Strip and Jericho in May 1994, is to last five years with the permanent status due to come into force from 1999.

Elections for the 82-member autonomy council and a separately elected president are expected to be held around March 1996 according to the agreement initialled in Taba, Egypt, by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

Mr. Qouriea said the accord's provisions for a redeployment of the Israeli army from population centres in the West Bank would, in its first stage, give the Palestinians control of "four or five per cent" of the territories. "But in the agreement we

were able to get (control) of a total 31 per cent" after further redeployments, he said.

The three-stage redeployment will "complete the boundaries of the Palestinian state except for the matters to be considered in final status talks."

The status of "the (Jewish) settlements, which are eight per cent of the land, Jerusalem, which is one per cent, and three to five per cent called military border regions" will be negotiated starting May, Mr. Qouriea said.

"But excepting them, 87 per cent of the West Bank will be under the Palestinian state" once the Taba accord is fully implemented, he said.

The accord outlines three regions for an Israeli redeployment. In areas A and B, the main towns and villages of the West Bank, the Israeli army is to withdraw except for Hebron where it will redeploy, while preserving security rights in area B.

In area C, unpopulated areas of strategic importance to Israel, the army will remain but the self-rule council will have civil powers.

Mr. Qouriea said Palestinian gains in the accords were "more than I expected" from negotiations and that the land area to be handed over was more than provided for in the 1993 Oslo autonomy agreements.

Generation of Iraqi children hard-hit by starvation — WFP

GENEVA (R) — A United Nations agency said on Tuesday alarming food shortages in Iraq were causing irreparable damage to an entire generation of children and more than four million people were at severe risk.

In comments issued in Geneva, Dieter Hannusch of the Rome-based World Food Programme (WFP) said that in a two-week tour he and his team had found conditions as bad as anything he had seen in some 24 years in the field.

Iraq remains politically and economically isolated under President Saddam Hussein's rule and crippled by U.N. trade sanctions imposed for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

"We are at the point of no return in Iraq," said Mr. Hannusch, WFP's chief emergency support officer. "More and more people spend their whole day struggling to find food for survival. The social fabric of the nation is disintegrating."

The report quoted WFP's regional manager for Iraq, Mona Hannam, as saying: "There are actually more than four million people, a fifth of Iraq's population, at severe nutritional risk."

These included 2.4 million children under five, some 600,000 pregnant women or nursing mothers and destitute women who are heads of household "as well as hundreds of thousands of elderly with no-one to help them."

"Alarming food shortages are causing irreparable damage to an entire generation of Iraqi children," the WFP said.

"The WFP comments followed a report by a U.N. crop and nutrition status assessment mission to Iraq, part of which was made available to Reuters in Baghdad last week, which said the food situation was made worse by a poor harvest."

But the WFP said the fact that the 1995 harvest was about 16 per cent below average had little effect on the food situation in a country that had traditionally imported 70 per cent of its food needs.

Iraq has been under a U.N.-imposed trade embargo since its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

Mr. Hannusch said the main problem was that money had lost its value in Iraq and 70 per cent of the population had little or no access to food because they lacked purchasing power.

"The market price of subsistence foods for a family of five is about \$26 a month," he said. "The average wage earner in the south makes between \$3 and \$5 a month." While salaries in the north were higher, so were food prices.

The WFP team reported that pediatric wards of the hospitals that were functioning housed cases of malnutrition hardly ever seen in any other country suffering from chronic food shortages.

Lack of protein was causing irreversible damage to both the physical and mental health of small children.

The incidence of severe malnourishment and stunting among children under the age of five was some 29 per cent,

comparable to that of the west African state of Mali with many children looking like old people, the WFP said.

It cited Iraqi government figures showing an infant mortality rate of 92 per thousand live births, and an under-five mortality rate of 128 per thousand live births, which the WFP said was similar to the situation in Sudan. "It help does not come soon, the survivors will be the sanction-breakers, the black-market dealers and the thieves," Mr. Hannusch declared.

Vaccination planned

Iraq is to carry out a mass campaign to vaccinate women against tetanus next month, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) said Tuesday.

The campaign will target women in 11 provinces in southern and central Iraq where tetanus cases were recorded last year, a UNICEF official said in Baghdad.

The U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation will provide Baghdad with nine million vaccines for the campaign starting on Oct. 21.

In March Iraq vaccinated 3.5 million children under the age of five against polio, in the first such campaign since the end of the 1991 Gulf war.

The health ministry says that 75 children out of 1,000 die in Iraq because of a shortage of vaccines and medicine, compared to 25 out of every 1,000 before the imposition of U.N. sanctions almost five years ago.

15 killed in pre-poll Algerian violence

ALGIERS (Agencies) — A homemade bomb exploded in a police station, killing four, a car bomb blast near a barracks killed a family of five, and six bodies were found with their throats slit, Algerian papers reported Tuesday.

The attacks were the latest spasm of violence in this country torn by an insurgency since 1992 and appeared to be part of a destabilisation campaign ahead of the Nov. 16 presidential election.

Most opposition parties are boycotting the vote, which they call an effort by the military-backed government to legitimise itself.

More than 30,000 people have been killed since the government cancelled legislative elections in January 1992 that the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

Several groups of armed Islamic radicals have carried out attacks across Algeria in an attempt to topple the military-backed government and install strict Islamic rule. The bomb in the police barracks Monday in Tizi Ouzou east of Algiers was co-ordinated in a shopping bag that lay among other goods seized by police in a sweep of illegal vendors.

Four other bombs attributed to armed Islamic groups were planted in the same region Monday, one at a water tower, one near a telephone switching exchange and two car bombs elsewhere.

The bombs were reported by local witnesses, but were not confirmed by the authorities, and no estimates of damages or casualties were available. Nor were the attacks officially claimed by any group.

The car bomb near military barracks in Bougara south of Algiers blew up a house, killing a couple and their three children who were inside at the time. It took rescuers 10 hours to extricate the last of the bodies.

A French magistrate on Monday placed four Islamic militants under investigation on suspicion of belonging to a network supplying weapons to Algeria's Islamic Armed Group (GIA) rebels, justice sources said in Paris.

The four Algerians and one Frenchman of Algerian descent were detained last week in a police swoop in Marseille that followed a spate of bomb attacks in France.

Carter: Chances dim for peace in southern Sudan

NAIROBI (R) — Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said on Tuesday the Sudanese government seemed headed for greater international isolation, making prospects for a peaceful settlement of a 12-year southern civil war increasingly bleak.

"I don't think there is any doubt the Khartoum government is becoming increasingly isolated," Mr. Carter told a news conference before heading for the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa.

He was in Kenya for talks with President Daniel Arap Moi which centred on finding ways of reviving a regional Sudan peace initiative which stalled last year.

Mr. Carter said Khartoum could help end its estrangement by respecting human rights and showing it was not involved in "terrorist activities" to the region and across the world.

The Sudanese government of Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir banned political parties after it took power in a coup in June, 1989.

The former U.S. leader said a ray of hope in Sudan's festering conflict, which pits Khartoum's pro-Islamic government against two southern rebel armies, was an uneasy ceasefire he brokered in March between the combatants which appeared to be holding.

The initial ceasefire ran until the end of May, but was then extended until the end of July.

Each side has accused the other of breaking the truce. The two rebel groups, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) led by John Garang and the breakaway South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM), are fighting against what they say is domination of the mainly Christian and animist south by the Arabised Muslim north.

Mr. Carter said both — the rebel groups and Khartoum — had not shown good faith in trying to end the war which broke out in 1983.

"I blame the SPLA leaders and the leaders in Khartoum for not showing good faith. We can't do anything unless the SPLA and the leaders in Khartoum have a genuine interest to bring peace to the country. There appears to be very little activity on the peace process," Mr. Carter added.

Mr. Carter said Mr. Moi who chairs the regional Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Desertification (IGADD) was willing to revive Sudanese peace efforts when all parties were in agreement.

Talks collapsed last year after the two sides wrangled over various issues, ranging from religion to the constitution.

Sudan warns Egypt

Sudan warned Egypt on Tuesday that a conference of Sudanese opposition groups Cairo plans to host would step up the conflict between the two states.

"The act is not strange but it represents an escalation of the conflict between Cairo and Khartoum," Mahdi Ibrahim, an aide to Gen. Bashir, was quoted as saying by state radio.

Mr. Ibrahim, the minister of state for political affairs at Gen. Bashir's office, said SPLA leaders and other politicians opposed to Sudan's government would participate in the meeting.

Plans to hold the gathering showed an "aggressive behaviour" towards Sudan, he said.

Relations between Sudan and Egypt sank to their lowest after Cairo accused Khartoum of involvement in the attempt on the life of President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa in June. Sudan denies the charge.

They are also at loggerheads over the disputed border triangle of Halaib.

In Cairo, the government-owned newspaper Al Jumhuriya quoted Egyptian Agriculture Minister Youssef Al Wali as saying that a meeting of Sudanese opposition parties would take place soon in Cairo.

Mr. Wali did not elaborate and Sudanese opposition leaders in Egypt were not available for comment.

"While Sudan was committed to good neighbourliness and non-interference in the affairs of other countries, Egypt does not respect the sovereignty of Sudan and should choose its own way of life," Mr. Ibrahim said.

He accused Egypt of serving the interests of Israel and other foreign powers and said its behaviour was not in line with Arab, Islamic and African interests.

Thai socialites won't risk reputations to expose conmen

BANGKOK (AFP) — A senior Thai police officer has appealed to the wealthy, high-society victims of a gang that has worked the same scam for five years to come forward and lodge complaints, a local newspaper said Sunday. The conmen send letters to social notables inviting them to receive fake honorary degrees from famous U.S. universities at no cost. The Nation daily said, citing the commander of the police Economic Crime Suppression Division. But before the degrees are to be awarded, the gang asks for 100,000-800,000 baht (\$4,000-\$32,000) for the cost of hotel rooms and receptions, the daily said. No one of the hundreds of victims have filed a complaint with the police as it could damage their reputations, police Major General Pipon Na Ranong was cited as saying. So the culprits remain at large.

New pest threatens Caribbean agriculture

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad (R) — Trinidad has launched a campaign to fight the mealybug, a new pest that threatens to devastate agriculture in the Caribbean island and neighbouring Grenada. Officials said. They said the insect poses the most serious threat to agriculture in the region in 50 years. In Grenada, the bug has already devastated plantations of pineapple and tea trees. Officials have not determined when the insect entered Trinidad, where it was discovered last December. The Agriculture Ministry set up a telephone hot line and asked Trinidadians to report sightings of the bug which came from the Far East. Trinidad and Grenada are believed to be the only places in the Western Hemisphere infested by the bug.

Dog bites police officer in rear end

TORONTO (AP) — Instead of taking a bite out of crime, Rony the police dog took a bite out of a crime fighter. The four-year-old German shepherd bit a police officer in the buttocks while he was struggling to arrest a shoplifting suspect Sunday. "The dog took a bite of the first piece of flesh, and unfortunately, it was wearing blue," said a fellow officer. The officer received teeth marks on his rear end, but the bite did not break skin. Police said the officer was bitten when he stepped in between the suspect and the dog. The 39-year-old suspect was charged with stealing shirts from a clothing store and assaulting a security guard who tried to apprehend him.

Downing Street cat missing presumed dead

LONDON (R) — Humphrey, the Downing Street cat at Prime Minister John Major's London residence, is missing, presumed dead. "We fear the worst," cabinet office spokesman Tim Hunt told the Times newspaper, saying the cat may have succumbed to kidney failure. Humphrey's vet had placed the illustrious cat on a special diet two years ago because of kidney trouble. Humphrey had in the past been accused of snatching ducklings from the pond in nearby St. James Park and of raiding a robin's nest in the Downing Street garden.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kabul youths demonstrate against Pakistan

KABUL (AFP) — Several hundred Afghan youths carrying banners staged a demonstration here Tuesday to protest against alleged Pakistani interference in Afghanistan, witnesses said. During the protest, which was sponsored by the Afghanistan Islamic Association of Athletes, the demonstrators chanted anti-Pakistan slogans, echoing allegations repeatedly made by the Kabul government. The government claims Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence has been militarily assisting the Taliban's movement, which has made major territorial gains in recent weeks. Pakistan has denied the allegations and stressed its neutrality in the Afghan factional feuds. The demonstrators, after parading the streets, wound up their protest at the Defence Ministry in a symbolic gesture of solidarity with the military forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani. The Pakistani embassy in Kabul was burned by a mob on September 6, following the Taliban's capture of a western provincial capital, Herat.

Court refuses to rule on Abu Zeid appeal

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's supreme court refused on Tuesday to rule on an appeal by a university professor ruled a "heretic" and ordered to divorce his wife by a lower court. The court said the judgement against Naser Hamed Abu Zeid "has not been carried out therefore the court finds no need to stop its execution." The Islamist lawyers who won the June case against Dr. Abu Zeid have not filed to have him forcibly separated from his wife which an appeals court ordered on the grounds that a Muslim woman cannot be married to an apostate. The supreme court set a later hearing for October 30 to continue hearing the appeals filed by Dr. Abu Zeid and the general prosecutor. The suits have two parts, one to suspend the sentence and the other to overturn the appeals court ruling. Dr. Abu Zeid and a university colleague have also filed for a suspension in a lower court in Giza, ahead of a new judgement. The court is to study the case on Oct. 12. Dr. Abu Zeid did not attend Tuesday's proceedings as he is currently in Europe.

Pyramid-for-Toyota offer turned down

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama has turned down an offer by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to swap a pyramid for top Japanese carmaker Toyota Motor Corporation, the Sankei Shinbun said Tuesday. Mr. Murayama disclosed the episode from his visit to Egypt in mid-September at a meeting Monday with Toyota Chairman Shochiro Toyoda, the daily said. Toyota, the top carmaker in Japan, enjoys a 40 per cent share of the domestic market, has more than 70,000 employees and annual sales of more than eight trillion yen (\$80 billion). Mr. Murayama turned down the offer, saying "there is no place to put a pyramid in Japan." The newspaper reported. It was not known which pyramid Mr. Mubarak offered for the carmaker.

Extremist Hofmann sentenced to life

STUTTGART (AFP) — Red Army Faction (RAF) extremist Siegfried Hofmann was sentenced to prison for life Tuesday for the 1977 kidnap-murder of West German employers federation chief Hanns-Martin Schleyer and a bid to assassinate then NATO commander Alexander Haig in 1979. Hofmann, aged 50, who had already served a 15-year sentence for the attempted kidnap of a banker, was found guilty of five murders and three attempted murders in his second trial for acts committed by the ultra-left urban guerrilla group. Evidence from repented RAF members gathered in East Germany following the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall helped convict her.

Ramos orders embassy probe in S. Arabia

MANILA (AP) — President Fidel Ramos ordered the Foreign Affairs Department Tuesday to investigate allegations that some Philippine embassy employees were smuggling banned products into Saudi Arabia. Mr. Ramos told Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon to be prepared to dismiss any embassy official involved in such smuggling. Newspaper reports said five embassy officers were caught trying to smuggle boxes of liquor and pork products from Bahrain to Saudi Arabia on Aug. 26. The officials were not charged because of their diplomatic immunity, but the banned goods were confiscated, the reports said.